2002

The Poetry of Sidney Alexander

Terry L. Meyers
College of William and Mary, tlmeye@wm.edu

The Poetry of Sidney A. Alexander

-◇-

Terry L. Meyers

----◇----

The Poetry of Sidney A. Alexander

Not all to that bright station dared to climb.
--Shelley

Preface

I find myself the keeper of a modest flame that burns (in Shelley's image) barely brighter than a taper through the night of time. That flame marks the remnants of a nearly forgotten Victorian poet, Sidney A. Alexander (1866-1948), who won the 1887 Newdigate prize as a student at Oxford. Some of his other youthful poems after Oxford he did publish, and his name is recorded in the literary history of England.[1] But Alexander moved from the muses to Christ, and became a canon at St. Paul's Cathedral, remembered for his impressive work on behalf of the great Wren edifice, especially for protecting it during World War II. At his death, he left behind a body of religious and other books and essays, plus a notebook of his poems, mostly unpublished fair copies. Besides those he had placed in Victorian magazines, he seems to have had a plan to publish others.

My responsibilities as keeper began when I bought the notebook from an English book-dealer, Charles Cox, in 2008 for £70. Alexander's works, appearing here for the first time in full, may not greatly shift the outlines of Victorian poetry. But they are respectable (and often more) — and are interesting as the work between 1881 and 1890 of a young man with a good education and a poetic talent and vocation. At a minimum, the poems are a cultural marker of some largely traditionalist poetic sensibilities in the 1880's.

My publication of his poetic remains will not dim Alexander's taper, and should brighten it. Certainly things will be none the worse in this mad world for

1 See the entry in Catherine W. Reilly, *Late Victorian Poetry, 1880-1899: An Annotated Biobibliography* (London: Mansell, 1994), p. 8.

having added to the canon more Victorian poems.

I am grateful to Michael O'Brien for transcribing the manuscript initially; to him and to Shelly Holder for their careful proofing of the transcription; and to Jane Ryngaert for clarifying several questions and for scanning the manuscript. She, Michael, and Shelly were all at the time students at the College of William and Mary. The English Department's Johnson Fund, a generous endowment from John Rochelle Lee Johnson, Jr., supported their work. I also thank William and Mary for the leave that advanced this undertaking; Wim Van-Mierlo and the School for Advanced Studies at the University of London for hosting its publication; Zoe Holman for her work in bringing the edition on line; Lew Leadbetter, for help with the Greek; Carl Daw, Retired Director of the Hymn Society in the U.S. and Canada; Simon May, Archivist at St. Paul's School; Jo Wisdom, Librarian of the St. Paul's Cathedral Library, and his colleague Simon Carter; the librarians at Swem Library, especially Cynthia Mack, and elsewhere, especially Rich Bennet at the University of Florida and Alison Leslie at the National Library of Scotland (all went beyond the call of duty tracking down *Home Chimes* where Alexander published several of his poems).

Two final notes: my citations frequently come from material available on line but only in instances where I doubt the stability of the url do I record that. And any errors are, of course, my own.

Terry L. Meyers

Chancellor Professor of English

December 2012 The College of William and Mary in Virginia

§

Winning the Newdigate Prize was a recognition poets at Victorian Oxford aspired to. He who won might proceed to fame. John Ruskin won it in 1839, Matthew Arnold in 1843, Oscar Wilde in 1878. But life is quirky. Swinburne did not win in 1857 but still managed a spectacular career. And some winners went nowhere, at least in verse (think of John William Burgon, the winner in 1845).

And though Oxford and many others thought highly of the prize, some in the England of the 1880's were skeptical. Mr. Punch was skeptical, mocking perhaps more than one winner as a "lilliput lyrist":

> In days gone by at Oxford
>
> He'd gained the Newdigate,
>
> And his career was settled
>
> From that auspicious date.
>
> For Oxford's got the contract
>
> To supply one Bard a year
>
> Even though divine afflatus
>
> May be flatter than their beer.2

Mr. Punch derided "mad Billy Blake" and cautioned "Bardlings" "in the career of boys / Who think that they are MILTONS / If they only make a noise." But the winner of the 1887 Newdigate, Sidney Arthur Alexander, 21 years old and a student at Trinity College, had a reasonable hope for a bardic career. The prize confirmed abilities already manifest and acknowledged at his ancient and prestigious school in London, St. Paul's School. He had as a student there admired poets and the important roles they played in the life of a nation, roles more enviable, he thought, than those of politicians.[3]

Alexander's academic achievements at school and at university were of a piece. At St. Paul's he had been elected on September 4, 1879 a Foundationer (a scholarship student, as all Paulines were) by the Company of Mercers, trustees of

---

2 "A Lillyput Lyricist. Lines in a Newdigate Calendar," *Punch*, June 23, 1883, p. 293.

3 *The Pauline* (II,10 [May 1884], 232) notes a debate on March 18, 1884 "that a statesman is more to be admired than a poet": "S. A. Alexander vigorously exalted the poet, and ran down the character of the politician."

the school. Whatever brought him to St. Paul's School (and his family must have valued education[4]) introduced him to a school and to an intellectual and spiritual way of life that he was drawn to — and also to the great Cathedral itself, to which Alexander would dedicate his life through Christ.

By the time Alexander left St. Paul's School, at Apposition, July 15, 1885 (the first founder's day in the new buildings, the school having moved to Hammersmith from the City to escape the noise and the grime), his awards had piled up, foreshadowing his successes at Oxford, to which he was awarded a Foundationer's scholarship. At the 1882 Apposition, he "read selections from his poem on 'Cædmon' [in this volume], to which had been awarded the Milton prize."[5] He was active in debate (in English and in French),[6] received at the 1883 Apposition honorable mention for essays in French and English[7] and at the 1884 Apposition

4 Janet Alexander (1868-1956), sister to Alexander, married in 1891 the distinguished physiologist Leonard Hill (see "The Life of Sir Leonard Erskine Hill, FRS [1866-1952]," by Sir Austin Bradford Hill and Brian Hill, *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Medicine*, 61 (March 1968), 308.

5 *The Pauline*, I:2 (October 1882), 40. The Milton Prize at St. Paul's School began in 1851 when Sir Charles Mansfield Clarke (1782-1857, a distinguished physician) created an endowment at his alma mater that each year was to support the purchase of a "handsomely bound" copy of the works of John Milton (an old Pauline), to be presented at Apposition. The prize was to recognize

> the best Composition in English Verse not exceeding 150 lines upon a subject to be annually appointed by the High Master, especially of a sacred nature, and to be open to the free competition of all the Scholars of the Seventh and Eighth in the two highest classes who may desire to write for it—the comparative merits of the Compositions to be determined by the two Examiners of the School and the High Master (as Umpire) in case they should differ, and that this Prize should be annually declared at the Apposition, the Prize Compositions being written and submitted to the Examiners by a day to be fixed beforehand.
>
> (Robert Barlow Gardiner, *Admission Registers of St. Paul's School, from 1748 to 1876* [London: George Bell and Sons, 1884], p. 435)

6 He argued against the belief in ghosts, "on ne doit pas croire aux revenants," for example, and "against the instructive influence of the stage," in 1883 (*The Pauline*, II:8 [December 1883], 177). On December 5, 1883, he lost in supporting "a proposition which pronounced the printing press to be the greatest of all inventions" (*The Pauline*, II:9 [March 1884], 202, 203). On December 19, 1883, he had supported the argument that "nobody ought to smoke before the age of 21" (*The Pauline*, II:9 [March 1884], 203). The subject was apparently near to his heart, for on February 14, 1884, he "raged exceedingly against tobacco" (*The Pauline*, II, 10 [May 1884], 231). On November 22, 1883 in a debate on vivisection, "S. A. Alexander thrilled the house with horrid tales" (*The Pauline*, II:9 [March 1884], 206); in 1885, he prevailed in a vote against the practice (*The Pauline*, III:15 [May 1885], 352; he lost, however, in a defense of candles against gas). In a debate on higher education and women's rights, May 15, 1884, Alexander noted that he "failed to comprehend the connection between the two parts of the motion" (*The Pauline*, II:11 [July 1884], 256). He carried the day in an 1884 debate, arguing in support of the reading of novels (*The Pauline*, III, 13 [December 1884], 304; III:15 [May 1885], 358); he also prevailed in supporting day schools versus boarding schools (*The Pauline,* IV:16 [July 1885], 372).

7 *The Pauline*, II:7 (October 1883), 155.

was recognized with the Governors' Prize for a French essay, on "L'Académie française: son influence."[8] He became editor of the school magazine, *The Pauline*, at the end of 1884.[9]

Alexander's recognitions were impressive. He won the Milton Prize a second time, for "St. Paul at Athens" (in this volume); was one of three runners-up for the Greek Prize (for a translation from Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*); won the Truro Prize for an English Essay (on "The Revival of Greek Learning in England in the Fifteenth Century: Its History and Influence"); won the Thruston Prize for Latin Verse ("Tennyson, 'Gareth and Lynette'"); was a runner-up for the recently established Ollivant Prize in Divinity (Greek Testament); and was twice recognized in the Class Prizes, acting as "Prometheus" and "Perrichon," in the dramatic scenes from Aristophanes and Labiche.[10] He had been runner-up in 1883 and 1884 for the Milton Prize with "Daniel" and "Ἑνη καὶ Νέα : Farewell to S. Paul's School: On the Removal of the School to Hammersmith," both in this volume. He also won the prize in French Composition in 1884.

Alexander entered Trinity College, Oxford, in 1885, and continued his academic success.[11] By the time he received his B.A. in 1889 (First Class Litt. Hum., with a First Class in Classical Moderations in 1887 as well as the Newdigate the same year), he'd won the Hall-Houghton prize twice (September 1886, Junior; 1888, Junior Greek Testament). He received his M.A. in 1892,[12] having been a Denyer and Johnson Scholar in 1890 and receiving the Hall and Hall-Houghton Prizes in 1891 (Septuagint and Greek Testament).[13]

---

8 *The Pauline*, II:12 (October 1884), 274. The same year he came in second for the "French Prize" (p. 277).

9 *The Pauline*, II:12 (October 1884), 286.

10 I am grateful to Simon May, Archivist at St. Paul's School, who sent me a digital scan of the 1885 program for Apposition and of *The Pauline* IV:17 (October 1885), 388.

11 Paulines did generally do well: "between 1886 and 1895 Paulines won 173 entrance awards at Oxford and Cambridge, twenty-six more than any other school"; Raymond Asquith, however, commented of "a particularly strong lot of Paulines" in 1895 that "they are fatal people, turn out reams of machine-made verse at the shortest possible notice, and generally know everything" (A. H. Mead, *A Miraculous Draught of Fishes: A History of St Paul's School* [London: James & James, 1990], pp. 83, 84; Alexander does not appear in Mead's "Selected List of Old Paulines," an appendix to the book).

12 Alexander received his Masters degree on May 19, 1892 ("University Intelligence," *Daily News*, May 21, 1892 [on-line, accessed December 12, 2010]).

13 *The Admission Registers of St. Paul's School from 1876 to 1905*, ed. Robert Barlow Gardiner (London: George Bell and Sons, 1906), p. 91. Alexander shared the senior prize, £38, with Ernest

Given his distinctions at both school and university, Alexander was perhaps not surprised in 1887 to find himself honored amid the ceremonies of Commemoration Week, reciting the Newdigate prize poem, his "Sakía-Muni: The Story of Buddha," and in the presence of Robert Browning, to whom he was introduced, probably by another Old Pauline, Benjamin Jowett, the Master of Balliol College.

Commemoration Week was always joyful and even rollicking. Browning always enjoyed the week, visiting his old friend Jowett each June, as the academic year culminated and degrees were conferred and prizes distributed. Browning, indeed, reveled in the boisterousness, in the traditional and good-natured heckling of revered elders and recipients of honorary degrees. These "harmless drolleries of the young men," he explained to a correspondent, had been "licensed … by immemorial usage" and all targets were fair game, even the "honored ones," "the Reverend Dons," and guests like himself, "the poor poet." The winner of the Newdigate alone was always accorded respect by the students—the author, after all, was from among themselves and the deference they showed him only deepened the satiric jabs they aimed elsewhere. That was the case in 1882, Browning was pleased to note, when the student poet commanded a dignified reception.[14] And in 1886, again typically boisterous and a year when Alexander came very close to winning the Newdigate, Browning heard Richard Lawson Giles read his winning poem, "Savonarola"; Browning was powerfully moved that year—he was seen to be "actually wiping away a tear" as Giles read.[15]

On Alexander's day, June 22, 1887, spirits were unusually high. A report in *The Times*[16] underlines the especially festive atmosphere of Commemoration Week that particular year. The weather had been glorious for weeks, which always gins

---

N. Bennett; the junior prize was for £15 (see *Jackson's Oxford Journal*, March 21, 1891 [on-line, accessed December 12, 2010]. *The Pauline* notes in a report of February 17, 1887 that Alexander was "in for Honour Mods., which begin in a few days" and hoped he would succeed, and thus "break the run of ill luck which has pursued Paulines in the schools of late" (V:24 [March 1887], 524). He was commended as well for being runner up in 1887 for the Gaisford Prize for Greek prose (p. 547).

14 *Learned Lady: Letters from Robert Browning to Mrs. Thomas Fitzgerald, 1876-1889*, ed. Edward C. McAleer (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966), p. 140.

15 See a colorful account of the 1886 Commemoration and Newdigate: "Dr. Holmes at Oxford," *The Outlook: A Family Paper*, October 20, 1894, p. 639. Alexander's own entry for 1886, "Savonarola," is noted in this notebook as the "unsuccessful Newdigate" for that year and is included, apparently, in a now missing "other book" (Index). His effort is recorded in *The Pauline* as having been "not far off success" (IV:23 [December 1886], 497 (the same report notes that "Alexander has appeared as a reviewer in the *Oxford Magazine*." His reviews are yet to be identified).

16 "Oxford Commemoration," *The Times*, June 23, 1887, p. 7f.

up the English mood, and it was the jubilee year — Queen Victoria, fifty years on the throne! The crowds of students and others kept spontaneously, unexpectedly, and perhaps not always appropriately bursting into waves of exuberant song, "Rule Britannica," of course, and also "Auld Lang Syne."

But this year, the Newdigate winner was not received with the usual rapt decorum—the drolleries lapped around and even over Alexander as he read his prize poem. Very likely no Newdigate poem, especially one on such an assigned and serious theme as Buddha, could have echoed the mood of the occasion in that particular year, but Alexander's solemn meditation on the spiritual growth of Buddha and the poem's sober application to young men contemplating careers, possibly even in the church, must have rung especially incongruously.

And Alexander's reading, wholly appropriate to the poem if not to the spirited and distinctly unspiritual sentiments of the crowd, was not well received. The reporter for *The Times* noted that "for once even the Newdigate was heard, or rather was not heard, with an impatience exasperated by its somewhat lugubrious delivery."[17] The accounts of Alexander that I've been able to find hint at someone unusually earnest, even for a Victorian, someone perhaps dourly or unduly focused on the seriousness of his undertakings. That appears to have been so that June day in 1887.

When Browning replied to a letter from Alexander, he mentioned the day and captured its tone. Writing to Alexander at his family home, 20, Denning Road, Hampstead, four days after the event,[18] Browning noted that he had "duly received" Alexander's "kind letter and the Poem" as printed:[19]

> I read the letter at once and can only say that my noisy young friends who so much interfered with my enjoyment of some charming verses deprived themselves also of what should have been both instruction and pleasure. I hope that the printed copy may gratify them as it has interested myself.

"Charming verses," "instruction and pleasure," "interested" constitute a modest encomium, perhaps not quite hailing the refulgent prime of a new sun in the

17 "Oxford Commemoration," *The Times*, June 23, 1887, p. 7f.

18 I am grateful to Rita S. Patteson, Director of the Armstrong Browning Library at Baylor University for permission to use this letter.

19 *Sakya-Muni: The Story of Buddha* (Oxford: A. Thomas Shrimpton and Son, 1887).

firmament. Still, Alexander was surely pleased at the great poet's notice, and perhaps strengthened in his own seriousness as he reflected on the noisy lack of decorum among his peers.

Alexander's prize poem (see Appendix C) is in fact a remarkable effort—certainly worthy of the Newdigate and, indeed, more. Framed by telling epigraphs from St. Peter, Virgil, and Tennyson, it is, to echo Tennyson on "In Memoriam," the way of a soul—Buddha's, of course, but also Christ's, Everyman's, Victorians', and, no doubt, Alexander's, all faced, like Buddha, with finding their way through "a life of deep unrest, / Weak, conquering, conquered, struggling to be blest."[20] Its allusions are telling, to Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey," to Shelley (whose own "Alastor" was perhaps a model), and to Browning's meditation in "Bishop Blougram's Apology" on faith in a materialistic world.[21] Alexander and the judges who set the topic might have thought it could appeal to the young scholars of Oxford poised to leave the ancient dreaming spires, their shelter and comfort, for the hurly-burly of the world:

> Ah, sad it is to leave a cherished past
>
> And face a world of men, cold, bare, and vast;
>
> To give up all that we have loved so well,
>
> And turn and gaze and look the last farewell.

But the mood of that 1887 Commemoration Week was antipathetic to meditation. Though the poem was on the whole favorably received by the *Oxford Magazine* ("sustained melody and grace….certain higher touches of imagination and expression which give to the simple and quiet style an air of finish and

20 Another comment by Alexander (in the third person) on Buddhism (and quoting "In Memoriam") is instructive: "we ought to recognize more than we did the spiritual value of Agnosticism when approached from its positive side—to see in the Agnostic not so much a man who questions the possibility of knowing God, but one who stands in reverent awe and humility before the Eternal Mystery of the Divine Nature. That was the point at which Christianity and Agnosticism joined hands. He would say of Agnosticism, as he would say of Buddhism or Pantheism, of Positivism or Secularism, 'They are but broken lights of Thee, and Thou, O Lord, art more than they'" (Christian Truth and Other Intellectual Forces: Speeches and Discussions…. Pan-Anglican Congress, 1908 [London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1908], pp. 32-33).

A few years later, however, Alexander was at pains to clarify that the various religions are not "so many level and adjoining fields from which various noble ideals and useful maxims and lessons may be drawn indifferently…. Not Buddha, not Mohammed, but Christ is the Way, the Truth, and the Life" ("The Belief of the Saints," The Saints' Appeal: Sermons Preached in St. Paul's Cathedral [London: Edward Arnold, 1912], pp. 16-17).

21 J. Jeffery Franklin does little with the poem in linking it to Edwin Arnold's *The Light of Asia* (1879) ("The Life of the Buddha in Victorian England," *English Literary History*, 72 [2005], 941).

distinction"[22]), the poem may be of more interest now, historically, than it was on its own day of academic glory.

Sidney Alexander's life before and after St. Paul's School and the Commemoration week at Oxford, the highlight of his academic career, is marked by so few recoverable points that little more than a silhouette emerges. We know that Alexander was born April 2, 1866, in Hampstead, the son of a bank clerk,[23] and that after receiving his degree in 1889, he was, first, classical lecturer and then tutor at Keble College.[24] He had taken priestly orders in December 1890[25] and began an ecclesiastical career that was more distinguished than most, though perhaps not as distinguished as Alexander hoped or thought he deserved. Before becoming a canon at St. Paul's cathedral in 1909, he served as Reader of the Temple Church (London; 1893-1902, succeeding Alfred Ainger), Examining Chaplain to the Bishop of Hereford (1895), Select Preacher to Oxford University (1901), and Canon of Gloucester (1902).[26] He published his first book, *Christ and Scepticism* in 1894 and his second, *The Christianity of St. Paul*, in 1899. He willingly entered the lists in the periodical press as well on behalf of Christian faith in a time of materialism; in January 1893, he published an essay in *The Contemporary Review*, "Pessimism and Progress," combating Schopenhauer and despair, declaring that

22 May 25, 1887, p. 233; the full review is in Appendix D. In 1970, William Peiris was muted in his estimation, noting that "inspired by *The Light of Asia*, a young undergraduate Sidney Arthur Alexander of Trinity College, Oxford, wrote *Sakya-Muni—The Story of Buddha* as the Newdigate Prize poem of 1887. But it did not reach the standard of Arnold's poem *The Feast of the Belshazzar*, which won the Newdigate Prize in 1852" (*Edwin Arnold: His Services to Buddhism* [Kandy, Sri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society, 1970, on-line http://www.bps.lk/olib/wh/wh158-p.html, accessed December 1, 2010).

23 Reilly records Alexander's father as "Frederick Alexander, gentleman" (p.8).

24 *The Times*, May 5, 1892, p. 6f.

25 The date of Alexander's taking priestly orders, December 21, 1890 (see *Jackson's Oxford Journal*, December 27, 1890 [on-line, accessed December 12, 2010]), became an issue when his appointment to a canonry at Hereford Cathedral was announced in 1895. Several opponents and one supporter wrote letters to *The Times*; in the end, since he had not been in orders for the requisite six years, his appointment was withdrawn. One of his opponents fully recognized his "brilliant parts and promise," his "brilliant academic career," but the letter of the law prevailed (see "The Appointment to a Hereford Canonry," *The Times*, January 6, 1896, p. 4f; see for other relevant letters *The Times*, January 1, 1896, p. 10b; January 8, 1896, p. 13e; January 13, 1896, p. 4e; and January 24, 1896, p. 8b. Alexander was ordained a Deacon on December 21, 1889 (see *Jackson's Oxford Journal*, December 28, 1889 (on-line, accessed December 12, 2010].

Letters to Alexander concerning the Hereford episode (and other matters) are printed in *The Life of Bishop Percival*, by William Temple (London: Macmillan and Company, 1921).

26 *Admission Registers* (1906), p. 91. In his first years as a priest, Alexander appears to have worked with Andrew Clark, Vicar of St. Michael's, Oxford, for Clark thanked him for taking a "great part of my necessary duties" there so that Clark could finish the second volume of *The Life and Times of Anthony Wood, Antiquary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1892); see the Preface, p. [v].

"Pessimism has had its day."[27] His published works include a contribution to a book on *What Happens After Death?* where he based his belief on "science itself," "the conservation of energy, the continuity of force."[28]

He appears to have met Lily Redfern, his future wife, and fallen in love with her about 1886;[29] in 1891, they married. Until approximately the time of his marriage, he appears from material in the present notebook to have contemplated a poetic career, possibly thinking to maintain a connection, like so many English prelates, with the muses, especially a muse sympathetic to his religious and spiritual sensibilities. But although quite late in his life Alexander penned at least two more poems, a "Processional Hymn" and "This England" (both in Appendix B), nothing so far discovered suggests he did anything except step away from a career in which he had some success and, indeed, talent. About why he did that I can only speculate. Perhaps he came to a judgment that as a poet he might not join in the end those Shelley saw as robed in dazzling immortality even if their names in this life are dark.[30] Perhaps he met difficulty in placing his poetry. Perhaps his ecclesiastical responsibilities intruded or became more pressing or more interesting.

One clue may lie in the circumstances of his last recorded appearance as a poet, in a religiously oriented general magazine, *The Quiver*: "By the River" was published there in June 1891, signed with but the initials "S. A. A." That his name is absent too from the list of "Principal Contributors," all of them ecclesiastics, may hint that he was consciously setting aside publication to pursue his own churchly career, that he perhaps wanted poetry no longer to be associated with his name.[31]

---

27 *The Contemporary Review*, 63 (January 1893), 83. Thomas Hardy quoted the passage in his notebooks and commented dismissively, "comforting, but false" (qtd. in Walter F. Wright, *The Shaping of "The Dynasts"* [Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1967], p. 42).

28 "Science and Immortality," in *What Happens After Death?* (NY and London: Funk and Wagnalls, 1916), p. 93

29 See the love poems from the summer of 1886 in this edition playing on the word "lily"; a slightly later poem, "A Smile," suggests a meeting in Florence, but apart from a reference to "Florence the bright, the gay, the laughter-loving" in a brief mention of Savonarola, I know of no further evidence to support a visit to Italy ("Limits of Revelation," *Christ and Scepticism* [London: Isbister and Company, 1894], p. 285).

30 In one of his sermons, we may glimpse Alexander's sense that distinction in certain undertakings was particularly difficult in modern times: "today the fields of art, literature, politics, and religion offer us wide levels of average respectability, but few types of distinctive personal excellence" ("The Gift of the White Stone," *The Saints' Appeal*, p. 74); possibly he simply chose to focus his energies on his ecclesiastical career.

31 The list of magazines Alexander compiled for possible submissions (at the end of the poems in this volume) suggests only that he was contemplating placing his poems some indeterminate time

And another clue may lie in a sermon published in 1894, "Christianity and Asceticism," where discipline and a carefully defined asceticism are necessary: "better so to follow God that the pleasures of eye and hand are forgotten in Him, or pursued only in reference to Him." In a note, Alexander cites Spenser, Wordsworth, and Browning as he specifies that a "peculiar danger" attends "every noble sensibility, every high faculty of man," including the "sensibility to beauty." He admires Spenser's desire "to strengthen every part of our nature by heroic discipline, and to subordinate the lower parts to the higher," perhaps implying in even his wording that while "the eye was an inlet of divine things for the use of the spirit" his own poetry might have been a distraction: "in obeying the divine summons … there must be no hesitation… no looking back with longing to the valleys of enticement in which we cannot keep our hand upon God's plough."[32]

But whatever his motivations Alexander did not destroy his notebook, and his poems are good enough to be preserved, though some are modest enough in aim. On the religious poems: as G. B. Tennyson has remarked, "the study of minor religious poetry [offers aesthetic pleasures and] discloses other insights and pleasures peculiar to it alone."[33] But although Alexander and his work will never have the interest of the major religious poets of the Victorian Age, e.g., Tennyson, Christina Rossetti and Gerard Manley Hopkins, his other poetry was good enough that editors at several leading Victorian periodicals published it34—and my own appreciation of it has grown over time.

In any case, from 1909 until his death in 1948, Alexander was a devoted—if

---

between January 1890 through March 1892, the starting and ending dates of one of the magazines, *Igdrasil*.

32 "Christianity and Asceticism," *Christ and Scepticism*, pp. 146, 147 and note.

33 *Victorian Devotional Poetry: The Tractarian Mode* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981), pp. 1-2.

34 American editors also approved and in several instances (see the notes to each poem) lifted Alexander's work from its English appearance, almost certainly without his knowledge. The only review I've been able to locate of Alexander's work in magazines is a mention in "The August Magazines" in *The Leeds Mercury* (July 28, 1888) which singles out "Memories" (in this volume) as "tuneful and pathetic" (on-line, accessed December 12, 2010). Although Alexander's obituary in *The Times* (February 5, 1948, p. 6f) makes no mention of his poetic past, the much briefer one in *The New York Times* (as well as the Associated Press notice in at least one American newspaper) records him as poet as well as clergyman (see *The New York Times*, February 5, 1948, p. 23 of the Books Section, and the *Evening Recorder* [Amsterdam, New York], February 5, 1948, p. 8b; Alexander is recalled in both as a "noted theological writer and poet"). As late as 1965, Alexander was recalled as "Newdigate prizewinner" in a memoir by Neville Wallis looking back to his seeing Alexander in the 1930's, "his high, domed forehead seeming to emulate that other Dome he loved so well" ("Ghosts of the Row," *Spectator*, January 22, 1965, p. 93).

by some accounts a sometimes grumpy—servant of God as a canon at St. Paul's Cathedral, where he was the Treasurer,[35] the crown to an ecclesiastical career that he thought might have led, in a just world, to the Deanery itself. A recent study of Deans at St. Paul's discusses William Ralph Inge, Dean between 1911 and 1934, and refers to his "difficult" relations with Alexander. It summarizes Alexander's considerable accomplishments at St. Paul's while intimating his disappointments:

> Canon Sidney Alexander, who arrived at St Paul's shortly before Inge, and stayed for 39 years, was an awkward man but had a flair for fundraising. He master-minded three major fabric appeals and not only raised over £400,000 but ensured that it was wisely spent on work essential to the stability of the great building. Inevitably this led to the accumulation of power[,] and relations between him and Inge were often difficult. In 1915 Alexander and the cathedral surveyor organized the St Paul's Watch—volunteers trained to deal with any fires caused by enemy bombing—and, although it was not required to go into action during that war, its revival at the beginning of the 1939-45 war played a vital part in the protection of the building during the German air attacks on London.[36]

35 In a letter of February 29, 1944 to Norman MacColl, Alexander explained that the position of Treasurer is "a very ancient office, dating from the early part of the 12th century, and one of his duties is to submit to the Chapter any gifts to be offered to the Cathedral." I am grateful to the Librarian of the University of Glasgow for permission to quote from this letter, in the MacColl papers in the Department of Special Collections.

Alexander's appointment to St. Paul's was perhaps encouraged by his early appreciation for London and its grand buildings and spaces, his inclusion within a Christian's duty

> to protest, wherever and whenever he can, against the erection of ugly or unwholesome buildings, the destruction of the picturesque, or the conversion of historic sides and edifices into places convenient for business or for trade; to encourage the acquirement of more open spaces in the city, more great buildings, more colour and freedom and light and air; and to fight especially against that vandalism which has already half destroyed so divine a city as Oxford, and will ultimately call down upon us, in very serious earnest, the curses of posterity.
>
> ("Christianity and Art," *Christ and Scepticism*, p. 104)

36 Trevor Beeson, *The Deans* (London: SCM Press, 2004), p. 138.

One of the Deans who served with Alexander, W R. Matthews, includes in his history of St. Paul's a judiciously admiring portrait of Alexander. Matthews recognizes Alexander's many accomplishments as "a man of ability" even as he intimates Alexander's holding "unconventional views on some subjects such as taxation" and representing "in the chapter the policy of keeping to the old paths and steadily maintaining the tradition established by Gregory and Liddon." Matthews notes that Alexander's "obstruction of measures which I regarded as obviously desirable sometimes almost reduced me to despair" (*A History of St. Paul's Cathedral and the Men Associated with It*, ed. W. R. Matthews and W. M. Atkins [London: Phoenix House, 1957], pp. 304-305). Matthews also mentions Alexander's "being an excellent preacher in the Victorian style" (p. 304), a judgment

What evidence I can find suggests that Alexander was not always a pleasant colleague, was indeed irascible at times.[37] Whoever wrote his obituary, presumably a fellow canon, noted dryly that "he could speak like one who knew his own mind."[38] In one of his early sermons, Alexander had commented that "the root of all evil is not the love of money, but moral compromise," which may tell much about him.[39] In Inge's case certainly, Beeson comments later, Alexander "caused Inge a great deal of trouble" and that he "was a powerful figure and disappointed that he had been passed over for the deanery" in 1934 (p. 160). Inge himself wrote in his diary a year after his retirement that he had not anticipated "how great the relief would be to be free of Alexander and the minor canons" (p. 137). Even at his succession as Dean of St. Paul's, Inge had been cautioned by one of the canons, the Archdeacon of London, that as long as Alexander and a fellow canon "are both here you are not going to be allowed to do anything"; to be Dean, he was told, was to be "'like a mouse watched by four cats'" (p. 136).

Alexander was not discreet in his disdain for Inge, as recorded in the diary of an acquaintance whom he visited ostensibly to discuss the stability of the Cathedral. David Lindsay, the Earl of Crawford, recorded the true reason for the visit:

> but I soon discovered that he is absorbed in one problem and one only, namely his chance of succeeding Inge in the Deanery which will be vacated three or four months hence. His hatred of the Dean is frank and avowed. He looks upon him as an unbeliever, dislikes his habit of reading more or less secular books all through divine service, but most of all Canon Alexander is indignant at Inge's refusal, maintained I suppose for fifteen or twenty years, to raise a finger to fight the battle of the Cathedral structure. The whole

---

confirmed by Edmund Arbuthnott Knox who recalls Alexander's preaching as a Lenten preacher who, exceptionally, "left a permanent witness to his usefulness [at St. Philip's Church, Birmingham] in the shape of a class of adults, solicitors, and other business men asking to be instructed for Confirmation" (*Reminiscences of an Octogenarian, 1847-1934* [London: Hutchinson, n.d. (1935)], p. 172).

37 Even as a Reader at the Temple Church, Alexander seems to have engendered opposition (see H. C. Colles, *Walford Davies: A Biography* [London: Oxford University Press, 1942], p. 54). When W. H. Elliott was named a residentiary canon at St. Paul's in 1929, he joined "a chapter whose vocabulary did not include the word 'change'; he was greeted when he presented his letter of appointment to Alexander — the only reaction was that the appointment came with "indecent haste" and Elliott "began what he described as 'one of the most miserable and wretched times of my life'" in a cathedral he found "'dead, very dead'" (Beeson, p. 136).

38 "Canon Alexander," *The Times*, February 5, 1948, p. 6f.

39 Quoted from his collection *The Mind of Christ* (1903) in "Moral Compromise," *The Expository Times*, 14:8(1903), 354.

> of this he left to Alexander, who got uncommonly little help from other members of the chapter.[40]

In part, the conflict with Inge was theological, with Alexander representing a traditionalist and Anglo-Catholic view.[41] And when Inge did retire, Alexander, Beeson notes, resisted the nomination of Walter Robert Matthews to be the new Dean (Matthews served from 1934 to 1967) on the feeble grounds that Mathews had received his degrees from the University of London and not Oxford or Cambridge; this view "was quickly rejected and Alexander, as senior canon, was required, much to his chagrin, to carry out the installation" (p. 160).[42] Alexander did have supporters for taking the Deanery; Sir Wallis Budge praised his unstinting efforts as a canon: "the Dean and Chapter have got all his life and service *for nothing*." But the Prime Minister, Ramsay Macdonald, would not consider him, and the Archbishop of London ruled him out "for obvious reasons."[43]

---

40 *The Crawford Papers: The Journals of David Lindsay… During the Years 1892 to 1940*, ed. John Vincent (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), p. 551. The diary entry continues in personal vituperation that may echo Alexander.

41 See Arthur Burns, "From 1830 to the Present," in *St Paul's: The Cathedral Church of London*, ed. Derek Keene, et al. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), pp. 92, 95. One of the other canons noted Inge's "blistering acidity" towards Alexander; Alexander could reciprocate, as in his denunciation in a sermon of "the egotism and inhumanity which are the scholar's besetting sins" (Burns, p. 96).

When the Canon avoided a St. Paul's Day dinner, the Dean blandly noted Alexander's absence to the guests: "Saturday night is his bath night." And in 1934 Inge wrote to another canon that Alexander was a "poisonous reptile," "insane, poisoned at last by his own venom" (Burns, p. 96). Adam Fox suggests that Alexander was "a difficult character …. perhaps too well aware of what the Cathedral owed to him," someone whose "methods" Inge "perhaps did not appreciate … as generously as he might have done" (*Dean Inge* [London: John Murray, 1960], p. 182).

Alexander's relations with his fellow canons were testy as well; during the war, the Dean and others thought Alexander might be safer beyond London, but he attributed their concern about his possible "reactions, collapses, and catastrophes if I continue to 'carry on'" to a desire to cover over what he regarded as their own "perpetual and prolonged absences" (Burns, pp. 97, 99).

42 The account in *TIME* mentioned Alexander, as senior canon, inducting Matthew, but took no note of any chagrin (December 3, 1934, on-line, accessed July 9, 2010). A comment by the biographer of a canon, H. R. L. Sheppard, contemplating the appointment of Matthews sounds suspiciously like it concerns Alexander: while Sheppard was "puzzling and wondering" whether to join St. Paul's as a canon, "an unattached cleric of London, who had his own reasons for wishing to keep the Sheppards in the country, was careful to inform Dick [Sheppard] exactly how tiresome and pedantic he would find the new Dean, who had not even been to a proper University" (R. Ellis Roberts, *H. R. L. Sheppard: Life and Letters* [London: John Murray, 1942], pp. 243-244). Roberts later describes this cleric as "Dick's friendly enemy" and noted that Sheppard "did not trust that man or his judgement" (p. 246). Roberts is discreetly eloquent on Sheppard's frustrations in dealing with the "ossified traditions of the Cathedral" and the "obstructiveness of his fellow canons" (p. 255), including the Senior Canon, Alexander (p. 259), who denounced the changes Sheppard would introduce: "here [St. Paul's] was no place for stunts and innovations" (p. 296). Sheppard was scathing in his catalogue of the shortcomings he found at St. Paul's (pp. 307-308), almost all of them seemingly indirect indictments of Alexander.

43 Burns, p. 96.

Although Alexander crops up with regularity in *The Times* and other periodicals, often the mentions are brief, citing his participation in a service at St. Paul's or elsewhere or his preaching on special occasions.[44] He was also reported as taking part in what he feelingly called a "heart-searching succession of memorial services" for ordinary Londoners killed in air raids.[45] These appearances in print convey some sense of him. Several reports capture Alexander carrying out his responsibilities for the fabric of St. Paul's.[46] One vignette, in 1930 in *TIME* magazine, captures the depth of his concern at threats to the Cathedral from construction near it. Railing against the possible sacrifice of St. Paul's "on the altar of commercialism," the Canon declared that the wet sand beneath the cathedral's foundations might be dried out by putting up new buildings nearby—"'We must have wet sand!' cried Canon Alexander fervently, 'We must have wet sand.'" He called on Parliament to create a "'sacred area'" around St. Paul's where digging and blasting would be outlawed.[47]

---

44 See, for example, the services for Sir Hubert Parry (*The Musical Times*, November 1, 1918, p. 491) or Florence Nightingale (*The Times*, August 20, 1910, p. 11e). Even today, the webpage for Lloyd's notes a November 19, 1918 service "for those connected with Lloyd's who have fallen in the Great War," a service "specially arranged by Canon S. A. Alexander" (http://www.lloyds.com/Lloyds/About-Lloyds/Explore-Lloyds/History/In-the-Wars/During-the-Wars/Lloyds-During-WWI, accessed July 20, 2010).

45 Burns, p. 95. Alexander's obituary in *The Times* suggests his sympathy before and during World War I with ordinary people in his being a member of the Central (Unemployed) Body for London and of the Mansion House War Relief Committee ("Canon Alexander," February 5, 1948, p. 6f). He returned to the theme in such a sermon as that in 1925 where he urged that in the aftermath of the War, "humanity, wounded and half dead," needed "men of good will … active, thoughtful, and thorough in personal service" ("The Judges at St. Paul's," *The Times*, June 25, 1925, p. 16a. In 1945 he sent Albert Schweitzer's hospital a contribution on Schweitzer's 70th birthday along with an "aimable mot" apparently reminding Schweitzer of a visit together (Schweitzer's thank you letter of April 2, 1945 was offered for sale; see http://www.historyforsale.com/html/prodetails.asp?documentid=262800&start=216&page=153 [accessed December 6, 2010]).

Even earlier, he had noted "the social problem, with its complex difficulties of pauperism and labour, and of the whole social and economic welfare of the people" ("Necessary Belief and Evidence," *Christ and Scepticism*, pp. 300-301) and regretted "the growing cleavage between rich and poor, the social unrest" ("The Character of the Saints," *The Saints' Appeal*, p. 11). That he inscribed a copy of *The Saints' Appeal* (now in the British Library) to "A. Mansbridge, with best regard. S. A. A. / Holy Week, 1912" suggests his sympathy with Albert Mansbridge, the advocate of workers' education (Mansbridge recalled Alexander as giving at Westminster Abbey when he was Reader of the Temple one of "the greatest abbey sermons" Mansbridge could recall: "Alexander, as he cupped his hands revealed how in Christ all that was true in all the world was gathered up and unified in perfect light" [*Fellow Men: A Gallery of England, 1876-1946* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1948), p. 16]).

46 The condition of the structure and especially the effects of construction in its vicinity had become a concern from the turn of the century, with some urgency in an ominous engineering report in 1913, the year Alexander called "the birthday of the whole movement" for restoring the fabric, something he thought Inge scandalously indifferent to (Burns, pp. 95-96).

47 "Must Have Wet Sand," *TIME*, April 28, 1930, on-line, accessed July 9, 2010. The bemusement in the article is repeated in a report in 1945 that during Alexander's 36 years as canon and Treasurer,

Another revealing report depicts Alexander amidst the rubble of bomb damage done to the Cathedral in a German raid of October 10, 1940: "Sleeping in a camp bed in the crypt at the time was the elderly Canon Sidney Alexander, who hurried up the stone steps of the sanctuary in his pyjamas to inspect the damage. 'The binding of the masonry put in by Wren must have been marvelous,' he remarked."[48]

Alexander was instrumental in saving St. Paul's in World War I and World War II. He was responsible in both wars for the St. Paul's Watch, volunteers who patrolled the Cathedral to snuff out fires before they could flare up more dangerously.[49] One of the WWII volunteers was a future poet laureate, John Betjeman, who recalled Alexander as "very old," "a recluse and tractarian-ish," resistant to the Dean's desire for short services at the Cathedral.[50]

Alexander's work, though often of a necessarily mundane sort on behalf of the structure of St. Paul's, was widely noted, as in his successful appeal to stop the construction of a tube line that would have endangered the cathedral's footings.[51] The Wellington (NZ) *Evening Post*, for example, quoted a London newspaper's account as Alexander in 1913, lacking funds for a legal undertaking, sought to draw attention to St. Paul's being built "on water-bearing soil above the clay," which could be drained by the construction, with consequent and disastrous "settlements of the foundations, and cracking of the walls."[52] The danger came, the Canon

---

the Cathedral "had shifted one-third of an inch" ("The March of St. Paul's," *TIME*, October 8, 1945, on-line, accessed July 9, 2010). Nevertheless, Alexander's efforts were ceaseless, and noted internationally, as in an article (with a picture of the Canon) in the Brisbane *Courier-Mail*, October 12, 1933, p. 14, on-line, accessed July 20, 2010. See too in 1929 the Canon's call for a "sacred area" to stave off the menace from the "utilitarian spirit of the age" "Sacred Area Round St. Paul's," *The Times*, November 13,1929, p. 16e.

48 See Andrew Barrow, *The Flesh is Weak: An Intimate History of The Church of England* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1980), p. 204. Full details of the raid, the damage, and Alexander's sleeping in the crypt are available in "St. Paul's Bombed," *Evening Post* (Wellington, New Zealand), November 12, 1940, p. 6 (on-line, accessed December 6, 2010). Alexander was quoted in *TIME* about a later raid as having been "'twizzled around by the blast'" ("Battle of Britain: War's Worst Raid," April 28, 1941, on-line, accessed July 20, 2010).

49 See Burns, pp. 95, 98-99.

50 *John Betjeman Letters, 1926-1951*, ed. Candida Lycett Green (London: Methuen, 1994), p. 336.

51 For the withdrawal of a proposal for a tube tunnel, see "The Safety of St. Paul's" *The Times*, February 26, 1913, p. 6a.

52 *Evening Post* (Wellington, NZ), January 25, 1913, p. 7, accessed on line July 20, 2010. In 1913, Sir Francis Fox had documented in several reports the dire condition of the Cathedral ("The Safety of St. Paul's," *The Times*, January 1, 1913, p. 9b; "Sir Francis Fox on St. Paul's Cathedral," *The Times*, June 3, 1913, p. 8c). The day after the first report, Canon Alexander announced steps

thought, when the "sacred area" near the St. Paul's was invaded, "sapping [Wren's] foundation by underground railways and sewers and … basements of offices and warehouses now descending, as they did in the City, as much as 60 ft. or 70 ft. below the surface."[53] It was an appeal that the Canon needed to make time and again — and did, in a multitude of talks, presentations, and books about the Cathedral and Wren.

Alexander's concern for the physical state of the Cathedral was necessarily tied to its fiscal state, and he undertook to raise funds. Arthur Burns sketches Alexander's successive efforts and campaigns (contemporaneously detailed in *The Times*) as the needs of care and restoration grew ever pressing. Burns notes that the results were "a remarkable achievement," as in one appeal in 1920 for £10,000, raised within days. Burns concludes that over the decades, the "fundraising was … widely and rightly recognized as Alexander's achievement"—and "not least by Alexander himself." Alexander directed his money-raising efforts especially powerfully to those made wealthy in the City, whose connections to the Cathedral he was pleased to trace; and he slyly suggested that to seek aid from the government rather than from capitalists not only raised complex questions of Church and State but would amount "to that worst type of Socialism which killed the spirit of voluntary service." Just in case capitalists did have hearts he was willing to invoke "the dying wish expressed by a little girl in Australia that her father should send five shillings for her to St. Paul's Cathedral".[54]

No wonder that in the twelve years after 1913, Alexander was able to raise almost £228,000, a staggering sum, and though he reported in a sermon in 1925 that structural problems remained, he assured the public that no danger attended those visiting St. Paul's, and "all that human skill and science can suggest has been done and will be done to keep the Golden Cross uplifted over the city."[55] As the Cathedral

---

were being taken ("The Danger to St. Paul's," *The Times*, January 2, 1913, p. 6c). For Alexander's moves against the tunnel, see "The Danger to St. Paul's," *The Times*, January 10, 1913, p. 8f ; "The Safety of St. Paul's," *The Times*, January 23 1913, p. 9e;. Some idea of the technical complexity Alexander mastered can be gleaned from his remarks in an interview in *The Times*, "The Safety of St. Paul's," February 29, 1924, p. 9a.

53 "Preserving St. Paul's," *The Times*, October 15, 1932, p. 13b.

54 "St. Paul's and the City," *The Times*, February 10, 1923, p. 5a. Alexander preached this in the presence of the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs at the Church of St. Mary Woolnoth.

55 "Condition of St. Paul's," *The Times*, February 9, 1925, p. 12f; by 1929, Alexander in sketching the history of repairs was able to report that £400,000 had been raised (Preservation of St. Paul's," *The Times*, October 25, 1929, p. 9e).

progressed to its reopening in 1930, Alexander reviewed the stages of its renovation and the prodigious efforts and materials expended; he emphasized the need for a spiritual renewal worthy of the renewed edifice, but could say with confidence that the structure itself was good for some centuries to come.[56]

Alexander's effort did not go without recognition. In 1931 at a vast gathering, a portrait of Alexander by Sir Arthur Cope, painted over 17 sittings, was dedicated at No. 2, Amen-Corner.[57] In 1934 the King invested him as a member of the Order of St. Michael and St. George.[58] As his career at the Cathedral of some 39 years drew towards its inevitable end, he was recognized further. Another imposing portrait, by F. O. Salisbury, was presented to St. Paul's to mark the end of Alexander's tenure as Treasurer; the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1944 saluted his overseeing the restoration the Cathedral's foundations as vital to the survival of the edifice during the German air raids.[59] But as old as Alexander was getting to be, he looked to the future, the future of the Cathedral, as the City began to rebuild after the damage from the war; he cautioned against "the intrusion of lofty, ill-proportioned building's on [Wren's] allotted space" for fear of isolating "the central shrine of the religious life of the English-speaking race throughout the world"—Wren's motto, were he able to survey developments, Alexander said, "even more now than then … would have been 'St. Paul's for the people.'"[60]

On February 4, 1948, Canon Alexander died, ten years after his wife,[61] in his home close to the Cathedral, 2, Amen Court. Arthur Burns notes that Alexander's "last years had been difficult," and that his colleagues, tired of "his autocracy," had forced him from his position as Treasurer; he "died alone and largely unloved in

56 "St. Paul's Cathedral," *The Times*, May 8, 1929, p. 21g.

57 "Canon Alexander and St. Paul's," *The Times*, October 29, 1931, p. 9c.

58 "Court Circular," *The Times*, June 27, 1934, p. 19a.

59 "Canon Alexander's Work for St. Paul's," *The Times*, January 27, 1944, p. 2e.

60 "The Future of St. Paul's," *The Times*, February 26, 1945, p. 2d. Alexander had been particularly distressed by the Faraday Building as it blocked the view of the Cathedral from the Thames ("The New View of St. Paul's," *The Times*, October 8, 1942, p. 7b). John Collins, who became a canon in 1948, recalled Alexander as "a great old figure" who had an agreement with "the City boys" that would shape rebuilding the area around St. Paul's so that it would "revert to what Wren had designed for his vision of St. Paul's." Unfortunately, says Collins, the agreement was only verbal, and failed (see Richard Bourne, *Londoners* [London: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1981], p. 118).

61 Lily Alexander died December 17, 1937 (*The Times*, December 18, 1937, p. 14b).

his dilapidated residence, the drawing-room of which served as his coal cellar."[62] His funeral was at the Cathedral (where he was interred) at 11 a.m. February 10; he requested that in lieu of flowers, donations be made to the Cathedral Restoration Fund.[63] In his will as in his life, Alexander was devoted to St. Paul's, leaving the bulk of his estate of £6,961 "to form a fund for the benefit of vergers and guides" at the Cathedral.[64] It was his final tribute and gift to the edifice that he had memorably called "the Parish Church of the British Empire,"[65] but that he also regarded as "the church of the London citizen" and "the home of the poor."[66]

The Poetry

Almost every poem in the notebook is dated at its end, presumably the date of composition. The earliest date is July 1881, when Alexander was 15 years old, still a schoolboy. The latest is September 1890, after he had taken his degree at Oxford and within three months of taking his final vows and being ordained as a priest. When Alexander speaks of Buddha's journey, "So passed he from young life and love's glad moods / To blank hills and the priests' stern solitudes," he was anticipating, in effect, his own life, poetic and actual.

---

62 Burns, p. 101. Burns comments further that "the cathedral had been his [Alexander's] life" and credits him even as late as 1944 with helping to reorganize the Cathedral's financial affairs and then anticipating the fund-raising to repair the damage from the war (pp. 101, 103-104).

63 *The Times*, February 9, 1948, p. 1a.

64 *The Times*, April 14, 1948, p. 7d.

65 Though Winston Churchill is sometimes credited, the phrase comes from a sermon Alexander preached during World War I (see *Henry Scott Holland: Memoir and Letters*, ed. Stephen Paget [New York: E. P. Dutton, 1921], p. 141); Burns so attributes it as well [*St Paul's*, p. 91). The point is proved by Alexander's own claim in 1922 as he began an appeal through *The Times* for £100,000, especially from The City ("The Danger to St. Paul's," July 3, 1922, p. 15g). As a canon at St. Paul's at the time, Holland had welcomed Alexander's appointment to the Cathedral in terms Alexander no doubt welcomed: Alexander could be an agent "to make St. Paul's the central home of England's worship" (p.158). Alexander was at pains to have St. Paul's regarded not as "a museum-piece or a monument of architectural skill" and hoped that it would never become so "remote from the daily life and business of the ordinary citizen" that "dirty little children will no longer play on its west steps" ("Future of St. Paul's," *The Times*, October 22, 1942, p. 7c).

Alexander's phrase "The Parish Church of the British Empire" features in newsreel clips in 1925 highlighting the need to repair St. Paul's: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3eW-F9udffY https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HfJBpOnfBno

66 Burns, p. 98. Alexander detected a correlation between the Cathedral and the religious faith manifested by the British—it was "the symbol and expression of the best characteristics of the[ir] religious mind—its directness, its simplicity, its truthfulness, its width of outlook" (Burns, p. 460).

The earliest poems here are the least interesting, except insofar as they are the products of a reasonably precocious fifteen-year-old serious about poetry. They manifest a solid command of rhyme, meter, and sound (and one at least, "A Spring Day," plays with internal rhyme), but their moral inclinations, conventional piety, or platitudinous themes would likely have pleased some undemanding Victorians more than us. "Night and Morning," for example, advises us to "Remember that the darkest hours / Oft come before the dawn of light."

But the poems get stronger as the dates advance, a number of them striking enough, especially the longer narrative poems, sometimes written to set subjects (as in his lyrics, Alexander becomes more adept at closure as the months pass). The poems explore largely traditional themes. A high proportion of them are love lyrics, mostly with the lyricist's generic voice, though from time to time intimating a biographical significance. The poems from the summer of 1886 play on "lily," the name of Alexander's wife-to-be (whether the two met in Florence as one poem, "A Smile," October 1886, seems to suggest is hard to tell).

The sustained religious faith of the earliest poems is checkered around the time, 1885, when Alexander goes to university--several poems that autumn explore hesitations or grounds for doubt, sometimes even intimations of despair. But faith prevails. A number of poems explore the nature and subject matter of poetry itself or express admiration for poets, whether directly as in the sonnet to Wordsworth or indirectly, translations or re-workings, as those from Anacreon, Heine, or Macpherson. "Cædmon" seems to articulate a poetic vocation Alexander might have been especially drawn to and in "The Dead Poet," Alexander in effect Christianizes Shelley's skylark:

> Come, plant a heaven-blue violet in the sod,
>
> And see the skylark soaring over him
>
> And singing: he too soaring sang to God
>
> And loved the upper light. Our eyes are dim
>
> With tracing the high pathway that he trod. –
>
> But hush! the skylark sings his requiem.

And the nature poems overwhelming exemplify Alexander's conviction in "Nature and Poetry" that "Nature's the only queen of Poesy, / Its life, its soul, its breath."

Several poems explore contemporary issues—a shipwreck (though the distance from Hopkins' "Wreck of the Deutschland" is evident); a mother and child abandoned and neglected even at Christmas time (an abandonment anticipated in the earlier "Clytie"); and homelessness. The poems relating to St. Paul's School and its founder will probably appeal most to Old Paulines.

Among the lyrics, those that simply record an impression, a moment, a situation or observation, with no moral application seem the most effective; they perhaps reflect some influence from the Aestheticism of the 1880's[67] (and an impulse towards simple and direct description is nascent even in the earlier works, though Alexander often succumbs then to applying a lesson or an allegorical reading).

The last poem in the notebook, "Parted," dated September 1890, is slightly more squeezed onto the page than the other poems, with its date consequently placed unusually as well. That and the theme of the poem tempt me to read the verses as an adieu to the muse, though such a closure is too neat to convince.

Alexander's poetics, as with his religion, are largely traditionalist. Despite the hints of aestheticism, his poetry would have done less to move Victorian poetry into the modern age than the works of the Pre-Raphaelites, Thomas Hardy (more a Pre-Raphaelite than many realize), or the poets of the nineties, just then about to come on the scene, just as Alexander withdraws. But his work has a charm and an interest that repay study.

67 See too Alexander's openness to "art for art's sake, beauty for beauty's sake": "I think Christians have been too ready to subordinate art to the high teachings which, no doubt, always attend it, if we care to trace them out, but which need not, and ought not, always to be looked for" ("Christianity and Art," *Christ and Scepticism*, p. 95).

Appendices

Appendix A. Description of the Notebook and Editorial Principles.

The poems presented here are written in a ruled quarto notebook of bound signatures, 18.4 cm. x 22.3 cm. The top and bottom edges show a faded red tinge. On the back cover of the notebook are tightly pasted scraps of paper, now much worn away, except for one in excellent condition, a clipping of the 1888 printing in the *English Illustrated Magazine* of "Sub Lucem" (in this volume). The front cover has on it a few scraps of printed material once pasted there.

In a neat cursive hand on the front endpaper (also ruled) is written "Poems-- / S. A. Alexander," and, in pencil probably by a bookseller, "Sidney A A-----." The pages are filled consecutively and numbered in ink on both recto and verso from p. 1 through p. 197. The rest of the pages, until the last five pages, are blank and unnumbered; the last five pages contain an "Index" of titles with the page number for the first lines of each poem. The first two pages of the index include the titles through p. 110, the next three the titles from p. 111 through p. 197; these last three pages have a second column ruled with a vertical line in ink; the second column has a note recording where a poem was published, usually but not always without a date. A published title usually but not always has a small cross to the left of its page number.

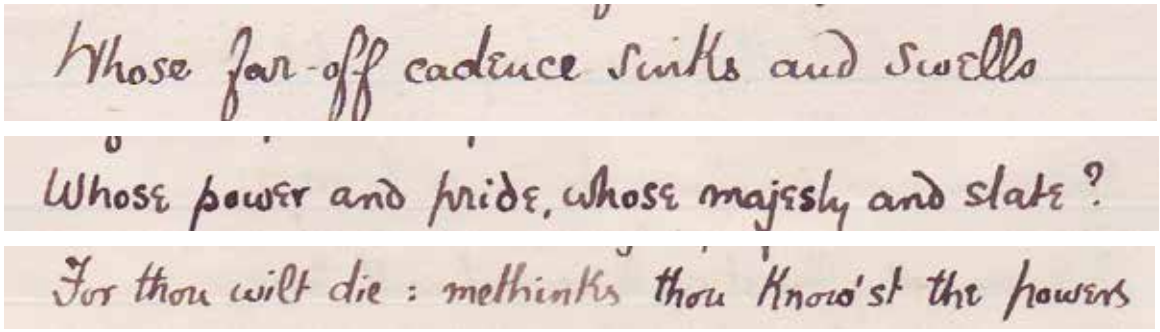
Though some of the poems show a few revisions, the notebook holds fair copies of poems Alexander wrote and revised on other sheets—at least so I judge from two clues. One clue is the pencil draft of "Night's Mystery" on the sheet he also used for the names of magazines to which he was considering submitting his work—the text in the notebook incorporates Alexander's revisions. No doubt he devoted similar attention to his other poems. The other clue is a blotted, i.e., reverse, image on p. 160, lines crossed out, as for a draft. On the opposite page are no signs of such a line and there are no signs of a page removed, which suggests a sheet used, and then quickly closed within the notebook. That the blotted lines appear nowhere else in the notebook suggests again that the notebook contained not everything Alexander wrote, but only those poems he wished to retain copies of.[68]

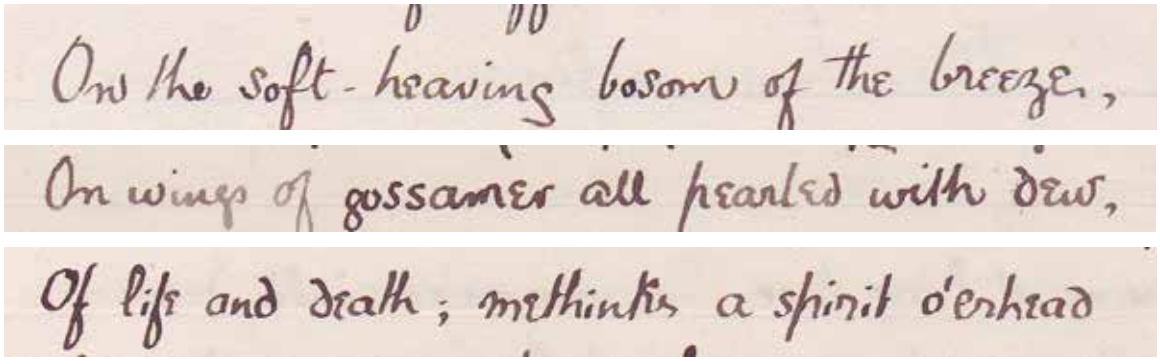
I initially thought I detected several hands in the notebook, with a difference

68 One other indication that the notebook served to compile fair copies may be the several inversions in date order, as in 1885 and in the fall of 1886, which suggest possibly that the sheets for copying had been shuffled into a wrong order.

especially marked between the works on pp. 1-65 and those on pp. 66-85. But I now believe that Alexander copied all the poems himself. The draft of "Night's Mystery" (Appendix E) and such revisions as those to "Wordsworth" (p. 111) provide examples of what is certainly Alexander's handwriting. Working from those and taking into account both that pen, nib, and ink affect the formation and appearance of letters and that Alexander habitually varied how he formed his letters, I see now only one hand throughout the notebook—Alexander's.

In the "Night's Mystery" draft, for example, Alexander shapes his capital A's in both rounded and angular forms. And consider the juxtaposed lines below from pages where the handwriting seems most to differ—the first line of each set comes from p. 54, the second from p. 66, and the third from p. 76:





Brought together in this close juxtaposition, the writing no longer appears significantly different. Or compare the "d" at the start of "die" and "death" in the two lines from p. 76—strikingly different formations on the same page. Similarly in the second example from p. 54, the word "the" appears twice—each time different. Indeed, though the "e" in these snippets has two forms, its more frequent form is common to all three.

My transcription of the poems in the notebook aims to be literal. All false starts, errors, interlineations, and the like are recorded (within the limits of

typography). Words or phrases deleted are indicated with ~~strike-through~~. Additions or substitutions are recorded where they are found as superscript when the substitution comes above a deleted word of phrase or within the line, not superscript, if not. Any complexities are described in footnotes (I have also lightly annotated the poems in footnotes). Unless otherwise noted, square brackets enclose my own words.

One poem, "Night's Mysteries," exists both as a fair copy and as a draft on a slip of paper (see Appendix E) once lightly pasted to the page just before the index. Three poems, "Cædmon" "Sub Lucem," and "At Moonrise" are present in printed form as well: "Cædmon" as an unrecorded leaflet (see below), probably in connection with the poem's winning the Milton Prize at St. Paul's School in 1882; "Sub Lucem," clipped from its magazine appearance and pasted to the back cover; and "At Moonrise," clipped from its magazine appearance and tipped in with the poem in the notebook.

Two other known poems are not present, the 1887 Newdigate poem, *Sakya Mundi* (see Appendix C), perhaps because it was published separately, and Alexander's effort for the 1886 Newdigate, "Savonarola," listed in the manuscript index with a note, "see other book"; both the notebook and the poem are yet to be found.

On the back of the slip with the draft of "Night's Mysteries" are lists of publishers, with addresses, for many of the leading magazines in Victorian England that published poetry.

The unrecorded printing of "Caedmon" (Appendix F) was tipped into the notebook at p. 13, a folded sheet forming four pages with the text of the poem within red rules and with the printed initials "S. A. A." at the end. There are some differences from the manuscript version, mostly incidentals, with one substantive being a misreading, i.e., in line 4, "chastic" for "chaotic." That mistake makes me think the printing was not overseen by Alexander, and that the leaflet was perhaps produced by the school for distribution at Apposition, the annual commemoration of the founder of the school (however, Simon May, Archivist at St. Paul's School, tells me the school's collections include no such printings, so it may have been a private undertaking by Alexander or his family). Apposition was marked on July 19, 1882 by the winners of the various prizes reciting selections from their compositions; Alexander "read selections from his poem" (see the 1882 volume of *The Pauline*, p. 40).

Appendix B. "Processional Hymn" and "This England"

Alexander provided the words to a processional hymn by Stanley Marchant (1883-1949), the organist at St. Paul's. "Blow the Trumpets! Raise the Voices!" was "specially written for the Fifty-eighth Festival of the London Church Choir Association" (see "New Music," *The Musical Times*, July 1938, p. 505, on-line, accessed July 20, 2010). Jo Wisdom, Librarian at St. Paul's kindly sent me a scan of the Order of Service for the St. Cecilia Celebration, November 22, 1937, which includes the text.

Processional Hymn

Blow the trumpets! Raise the voices!
  Now let all the wide earth ring
With the chants of mighty anthems,
  With the praises that we bring;
And let heaven's own music answer
  To the human songs we sing!

Thou, O Lord, art King of Beauty,
  Dwelling in eternal light,
There where all things that are lovely--
  Unimagined, infinite--
Live and worship in Thy Presence,
  Far beyond our shades of night.

Thou art Giver and Inspirer
  Of the beauty that men know,
All that with their hands they fashion
  Through art's mystery and glow,

All the magic and the wonder

That earth, air, and sea can show.

Alexander enclosed the next poem, a printed leaflet ("This England / by / Canon S. A. Alexander / St. Paul's Cathedral") in his letter of February 29, 1944 to D. S. MacColl (1859-1948); the letter and the leaflet are in the MacColl papers, University of Glasgow, Department of Special Collection, and are used with permission). Alexander wrote MacColl that "the little lyric enclosed may interest you. It was written eight months *before* the war began [i.e. early in 1939] and has had an enormous circulation through the Empire, and beyond it—a poor thing, but mine own, as Shakespeare did *not* say!" The poem was published, with music by Geoffrey Shaw in *The Music Times*, 80, No. 1153 (March 1939), 193-195; http://www.jstor.org/stable/921179, accessed July 19, 2010. In Australia, the Melbourne *Argus* printed it as having been sung at St. Paul's as an anthem, June 23, 1940 (August 15, 1940, p. 5, on-line, accessed July 20, 2010). And I am grateful to Joseph Wisdom and Simon Carter for having tracked down another printing, in the *Choristers' Magazine*, April 14, 1939, p.138; there it lacks the comma after "England' (l. 4) and is titled "England: 1939."

This England

I.

O little isle of mountain and of meadow,

Lady of heather, roses and grey sea,

In this dim world of deepening storm and shadow

Must not our hearts, O England, turn to thee?

On thee, ere now acclaimed the queen of nations,

The tortured peoples wait to seek release

From jealous fears and selfish aspirations

Amid thy sheltered ways of ancient peace.

II.

For the true path man's troubled soul is groping:
Be thou to him as tranquil lights that burn
Far off to some tired traveler still hoping
Homeward at last from exile to return.
Crown the long magic of thy guided story
With sovereign counsels generous and free,
And let it be thy final page of glory
That all men's hearts, O England, turn to thee.

Appendix C. *Sakya-Muni: The Story of Buddha* (Oxford: A Thomas Shrimpton and Son; London: Simpkin, Marshall, and Co. / Hamilton, Adams, and Co.), 1887.

Prefatory Note

IN the following poem, since it is impossible, on the one hand, to accept all or many of the mythical stories told of Sakya-muni, and, on the other, to arrive at the pure truth concerning him, a middle course has been attempted. In accordance with this plan, and in consideration of the length of the poem, and because Mr. Arnold,[69] treating the subject in the "Light of Asia" from the legendary point of view, has rendered it difficult for any one to re-write without necessary loss the incidents he describes, many of the stories on which he dwells have been omitted—(such are the Miraculous Birth and Boyhood of Gautama, the Tournament for Yasodhara's hand, the Tale of the Swan, and the like)—while others, as the story of the Visions of Disease, Age and Death, have been briefly referred to. These legends, of which some few are possible but the larger part utterly without foundation, have been omitted in the hope of obtaining a portrait of Sakya-muni which, if not exact (as none can be), may be at least an approximation to the truth.. At the same time an attempt has been made to throw some light on present Eastern feeling by inserting, immediately after the Prologue, a short account (given by Prof. Rhys Davids from Schlagintweit[70]) of "Lhassa Cathedral" and the service now employed. The main interest, however, of the poem naturally centres round the two great crises of Buddha's life—the Great Renunciation and the Enlightenment beneath the Boh-tree. Of the theological importance of Buddhism, of its influence on the world's history and of the parallels drawn (and, perhaps, at times overdrawn) between the 'Light of Asia' and the 'Light of the World,'[71] nothing has here been said: for such subjects lie quite outside the scope of a poem like the present.

69 Edwin Arnold (1832-1904), whose poem on Buddha, *Light of Asia: The Great Renunciation*, was published in 1879.

70 See *Buddhism: A Sketch of the Life and Teachings of Gautama, the Buddha* (1878), by Thomas William Rhys Davids (1843-1922) and B*uddhism In Tibet. With An Account Of The Buddhist Systems Preceding It In India* (1863) by Emil Schlagintweit (1835-1904).

71 John 9:5. See too William Holman Hunt's picture of Christ, "The Light of the World" (1851-1853), at Keble College, Oxford.

Ἕως οὗ ἡμέρα διαυγάσῃ.—S. PETER.[72]

Aude, hospes, contemnere opes, et te quoque dignum
Finge deo.—VIRGIL.[73]

Our little systems have their day:
They have their day and cease to be:
They are but broken lights of Thee,
And Thou, O Lord, art more than they.—TENNYSON.

OFT, when the summer moon has lost her glow,
Darkling, in silver mists and clouds of snow,
We stand on some dim mountain-peak and gaze
Out at the silence of heaven's starry ways,
Where far beyond the glamour of pale night
The lonely dawn is breaking into light:
And then we see the gates of Paradise
Open, and let a glory on the skies;
Till red flame rims the clouds, cold-grey but now,
Clustered like isles that gem the wild sea's brow;
Till rosy splendour swims from marge to marge
Over the blue dark: and the day grows large.
So, often, these dull peaks of latter time
Catch brightness from a twilight age and clime:
Some bold grand spirit's birth and pure renown,
Some patient winning of the martyr's crown,

72 Peter II 1;19. "Until the day dawn."

73 From *The Aeneid*, King Evander to Aeneas: "Dare to be poor; accept our homely food, Which feasted him, and emulate a god" (Book VIII, Dryden's translation).

Some search for good, some struggle after right,
Some yearning for God's face and larger light.
These beat on Time's illimitable shore
In half-discovered radiance evermore,
Blending with all our day. From either morn
We turn with hearts less fearful, less forlorn,
And go about our toil until the even
Wiser and gladder, while hid harps of heaven
Make music for us and a glory pale
Steals from the unknown realms behind the veil.
And so we win new beauty for our lives,
The love that yearns and the resolve that strives,
From these far beams, and see in them alway
Dim broken lights[74] of an eternal day.
As, when a sunbeam trips across a lake
And finds the water-lilies half awake
In the cool morning when the dewdrops shine,
They bud and blossom like a hope divine.

Come now and see where in far Eastern lands
Another dawn breaks on the ribbed brown sands
And stretches of green jungle and grey field
And broadening wastes of water, just revealed
And touched to crimson by the Eastern fire.
Yonder, in crowded rank of spire on spire,
A great cathedral, fashioned wonderfully,
Soars like a soaring anthem to the sky.

74 See one of the epitaphs to the poem, from "In Memoriam": "… but broken lights of thee" ("Prologue," l. 15).

Within the gate, Archangels guard the way,
Four, vast of stature: and the softened day
Creeps in dark gleams between the columned lines,
Such gleams as shiver on the whispering pines
On fitful winter-days when mists are rolled
Across the bleak shore and the barren wold,
Ere yet the young leaves, bursting from the rime,
Take the rathe beauty of the primrose-time.
And, passing inward, you will wonder there
At lofty pillars, carved and sculptured fair,
And fretted work of silver,—shrine by shrine,
Reaching to where in majesty divine
Great Buddha, wrought of gold, looks down on all.
And there is silence, till the trumpet's call
Thrice rings out sharp on the untroubled day,
And thrice loud echo swells and dies away:
Then, wending voiceless down the long-drawn aisle,
The priests of Lhassa in slow-moving file
Part the translucent gloom, and darkly seem
To move like figures in a painter's dream,
Mystic and lovely, in that mystic place:
And then the hymn and prayer for Buddha's grace
Spring from a thousand voices, and the air
Grows heavy with faint clouds of incense rare,
While dim lamps, lifted high above the throng,
Shine through the dusk, and mingling with the song
Make strange sweet union of sound and sight
Then, shrouded in a lurid robe of light,
Voiceless they pace again the long-drawn aisle,

And there is silence through the sacred pile:
Silence till black night clasps its sunlit spires,
And silence till once more the herald-fires
Outrun with flame the footsteps of the Morn.

Buddha, ‘tis hard for one thus later-born
To sing of thee and tell thy life aright;
So rich the hues wherewith, all misty-bright,
Old legends and quaint tales of Indian lore
Have decked thy deeds till larger than before
They loom like shadows on the Brocken hill.[75]
Thus too thou hast been traced by poet’s skill
In dainty pages delicately wrought
With rainbow colours from the skies of thought.[76]
Ours may it be, unwinged for flight so high,
To pierce the mists and there thyself descry,
Living like us a life of deep unrest,
Weak, conquering, conquered, struggling to be blest.

When Hellas’ wild-eyed Muse her stories told,
Tender and terrible, to men of old,
Was Prince Siddârtha born in that fair home
Where laughs Rohini through his sparkling foam,
And where Himâla’s snow-peaks, seen afar,
Tower gleaming to the storm-cloud and the star.
There year by year he lived a gentle life

75 In the Harz Mountains, home of pagan deities (see Goethe’s *Faust*).

76 Edwin Arnold’s poem (see Alexander’s Prefatory Note).

Apart from sorrow and men's passionate strife,
Circled with beauty that seemed ever young;
And he, like that sweet bird the poet sung,[77]
Was ignorant of pain and sin and care,
And knew of nought but bright love everywhere.
For him they wrought a many-coloured toy
Which they called Life—a sphere of light and joy—
And all things that might charm the eager sense
With princely pomp and proud magnificence.
Yet year by year he felt, as fiercer fire,
A human heart's unsatisfied desire.
The world called to him: louder, year by year,
Its 'still sad music'[78] broke upon his ear,
And touched him with a godlike discontent:
So stood he waiting, like that manhood spent
Under the peaceful blue of Syrian skies,[79]
Waiting Love's conquest and Love's agonies.
But when at last, like all, he came to know
The treachery of life's deceitful show;
When he had heard old age's faltering breath,
And seen the glittering scythe of dark-browed Death;
Then a deep boundless pity filled his breast
For sorrows of a world that knew no rest,
And all his longing was to fling aside
The joys that left his heart unsatisfied,

77 See Shelley's "To a Sky-Lark," e.g., l. 75.

78 See Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey," l. 91.

79 An allusion to Christ.

And seek in solitudes of wood and fen
Peace for himself and some good help for men.
The earth was beautiful, but not for him;
Its loveliness came to him veiled and dim,
Like day-dreams that are colourless ere even,
Or memories of an ante-natal heaven.[80]
No 'fancies from the flower-bells'[81] stirred his soul:
No lotus-bud or flaming iris stole
One moment of his trouble; all in vain
White and red roses tried to soothe his pain.
He watched no more beneath an angry sky
The purple lights of sunset flush and die.
No more he heard the leaping rivulets
That with the laughter of their foamy jets
Once brought a haunting passion to his ears.
Spring passed unheeded with her smiles and tears,
And Winter came, stern, uncontrollable:
But not for him the earth was beautiful.
For he was one to whom on viewless wings[82]
Come far-off visions of diviner things;
Who takes upon him, silent and alone,
The great world's griefs, and makes them all his own.
So on a night when only night-winds moved
He came to where in peace lay those he loved,
His wife and child, with nightingales to keep

80 See Wordsworth's "Intimations of Immortality."

81 See Browning's "Bishop Blougram's Apology," l. 183.

82 See Keats' "Ode to a Nightingale," l. 33.

Melodious watch and soothe them into sleep
As pure and sorrowless and free from dread
As the white flowers that clustered overhead.
And, while he looked with wide and wistful eyes,
The struggle came, as suddenly as the skies
Are rent with jaggéd lightnings . . . Should he lose
All that life held of dearest? Should he choose
This home of love or yon wild forest-lawns?
The crown of roses or the crown of thorns? …
'Twas but a moment: for he seemed to see
Gaunt faces and parched lips of misery;
And phantoms of ineffable despair
Started around him 'mid the roses there;
And ringing in his ears a wailful voice
Called him: he chose: the thorn-crown was his choice.
Then with a broken, bitter sob of pain
Too great for tears, he turned and looked again,
And turned and went forth to the moonlit skies
With night around, but morning in his eyes.

Ah, sad it is to leave a cherished past
And face a world of men, cold, bare and vast;
To give up all that we have loved so well,
And turn and gaze and look the last farewell;
To go forth to the lonely night alone,
And know the dear face is for ever gone.
Sad, Orpheus, was the long farewell for thee
When, turning to thy wan Eurydice,
Between her stretched arms and thy yearning sight

Rolled the black glooms of everlasting night.
E'en so Siddârtha passed: and legends tell
How the dark swarms leaped up from utmost hell
To bar his passage, offering in vain
Earth's kingdoms all and undivided reign;
Then, ever swooping down his toilsome way,
Wheeled round him as an eagle o'er its prey.
So passed he from young life and love's glad moods
To blank hills and the priests' stern solitudes:
Whose words he meekly heard with patient thought,
And learnt their lore, yet learnt not what he sought:
Till, worn and seeking still, he went apart
To some far cavern in the mountain's heart,
Where he might muse and meditate alway,
Rapt in the radiance of the Indian day.
Here as his deep eyes brooded on the ground
Forgetful of all living things around,
Across the grassy slope the lithe wild deer
Bounded with big brown eyes that knew no fear,
And dropping from the azure depths of sky
The wood-dove drank the stream that rippled by,
Nor feared the hermit who, all lone and still,
Sat pondering deep the laws of good and ill.
Near him the sunbeam lit the morning gloom
When with gold-sandalled foot and rosy plume,
High on Himâla's stainless peaks of snow,
The young Day travelled, beautiful and slow.
O'er him the bright noon deepened far and wide,
As the long hours wore on to eventide.

Last the red gloaming fell: and gold-barred bees
Sped homeward past him through the tufted trees,
Laden with all the wealth of early spring;
And jewelled moths swept by on noiseless wing,
Creatures of faëry and light as foam
That tips the crested wave: and heaven's blue dome
Caught suddenly the darkness, and above
Large stars came out to watch him as he strove.
Oft many an hour he sat and fixed his sight
On the tumultuous splendours of the night,
Or watched, when fierce winds bowed the tall palm down,
High clouds, empurpled with the glooming frown
Of some great fallen angel, surging through
The multitudinous stars and silent blue.
And still from sin and sorrow was his strife
To wrest the awful mystery of life:
While from the shadowy woods and stream's dark shore
Rang out the jackal's howl and panther's roar,
And formless spectres rose, scarce seen till gone,
Weird as a pine-fringed water in the moon.

Six years rolled by: six years of fast and prayer,
Of idle battling with the idle air;
Six years of thought that carved the faded brow
With lines of smothered passion, smouldering now;
Six years of waiting, with unswerving aim,
For that dim distant help which never came.
The world was still unhelped, his peace unfound,
When those few learners who had gathered round

Faltered and feared and fled and left him there
Desolate, face to face with his despair.
Nature in that dark day seemed one with him:
He saw the heavens to their farthest rim
Grow red and sullen; saw each mountain-spire
Flash coldly at the spear-like shafts of fire
That cleft the loud sky when the thunder-roll
Crashed in storm-psalmody from pole to pole.
He felt the whirlwind's and the lightning's power,
And all the man was changed in one brief hour:
In one brief hour his dead self burst the tomb,
Longing for love and loveliness and home.
So have we seen the waves at first sunrise
Float out in laughter to the glowing skies;
But lo, at night, high up the shore we trod,
Old Ocean moaning like a wounded god.

Deep down among the woodlands' tangled ways
Rich with the gifts of all the summer days,
Threading the hot paths where the jungle spread
A wilderness of leaves above his head,
And driven by his fiery thought along
Deep-shadowed groves amid the undersong
Of nested birds, and hum of rapid bees,
And murmuring of the lotus-scented breeze,
And dreamy voice of many a waterfall
That caught the many sounds and blent with all,
And glimmering mists of streamlets thick with flowers
Whose songs came trembling through the light-hung bowers

Like faint far music on a great calm sea.
There life in myriad forms pulsed fast and free:
There the gazelle looked out in wonderment
Between the leaves and watched him as he went:
There the green lizard darted, and the snake,
Scaly and cold, crept through the matted brake,
Or brushed the dew-drop from the sparkling blades
Over the tasselled grass in open glades
Where Evening like a lover tarried yet,
Blue-eyed and tearful, till the sun was set.
There, as he wandered on, he felt his brain
Throb with the sense of some exultant pain,—
Some half-felt feeling that the hour was nigh
To lift the veil and solve the mystery.
As, when March winds blow rough, to English homes,
Before the cowslip buds, a swallow comes
Bearing the summer on his steely wings;
Or as, amid the twilight whisperings,
Far off we see, before the white moon rise,
A dream of moonlight on the tranquil skies:
So came to him the thought that now he stood
Right on the verge of his long-questioned good;
And herald-fancies through his being sent
Strange awe and wonder and half-sad content.
Night was around when, weary of his quest,
Beneath a great tree's shade he sank to rest,
But not to slumber: once again the sky
Rang resonant with tempest-revelry;
Again the fire, the whirlwind and the storm;

Again appeared wild face and phantom form,—
Shapes such as he[83] alone could rightly tell
Who sang of Paradise ‘twixt Heaven and Hell,—
And loathly sinful things, ghastly and grim,
Peered through the night and seemed to gnash at him.
Then in the loveliness that once he knew
Came choirs of maidens trooping into view,
Beings dark-beauteous as the violet’s gloom
And frailer than the opening hawthorn-bloom
That first peeps out to hear the blackbirds sing,
Young child of sunshine and the red-lipped Spring.
And all the love and beauty man may know
As in a vision passed him to and fro
With dark beseeching eyes and out-stretched hand,
Calling his name in soft tones of command
And winning voices and the lute’s low song.
All night he sat unmoved, and all night long
Clearer the thought burned in him like a star
That not in measured rule, in bond and bar,
Not in vain scourging and in idle strife
With fleshly passions lies the truth of life,
But in large love and human sympathy,
In thought and deed of steadfast purity,
And in the strong uplifting of the soul
To self-distrust, self-conquest, self-control.[84]
Then suddenly the vision-peopled air

83 Dante.

84 Compare Tennyson’s “‘Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control / These three alone lead life to sovereign power” in “Œnone.”

Was empty, he alone left victor there;
And still the truth which he had sought and won
Truer and brighter deepened, till the sun
Sprang with a living glory from the earth:
And, all about, a stir of life and birth,
New voices of the day, a gleam of dew,
A scent of buds, a radiance of blue:
And in his heart a deep unbroken peace.

All this and more the ancient histories
Set forth in tale and legendary song,
Telling of Skandhas, and the cause of wrong,
The Eightfold Path he traced beneath the Tree,
Karma, Nirvana, and the soul set free:
And how, thereafter, wandering year by year
He told his message, and men thronged to hear
The sweet new teaching that so thrilled them through
With sense of something nobler than they knew:
And how time came when once again he stood
Upon the brim of glad Rohini's flood,
And found again the circle of old life,
Bright with child-laughter and a loving wife,
And told his truth to them, and bade them rest
In sinless peace, and gave them of his best,
And stayed awhile, and passed away again
Out to the wide earth and the help of men.
How can one tell the labour of long years,
The peacefulness and toil, the hopes and fears?
How can one measure out in common rhyme

The golden harvest of a world of time,
And sing the onrush of that mighty creed
Which, taught by fire-touched lips to hearts in need,
Swept on with sudden swiftness as a tide,
Under the north wind, surges far and wide
On the grey rocks and foams against the land,
And whitens all the waste of yellow sand,
Flooding the salt pools where the anemone
Waves its frail arms amid the cool green sea?

It was at dusk, one evening, that he came
To a grove desolate and still aflame
With a red wrath of sunset; and he knelt
Down by the silent river-brink and felt
Death's finger on his brow. 'Twas very strange
And solemn to lie there and know the change
Of the swift-coming death, the while he dreamed
In dreamlands of the past, and roses seemed
To crown his head and loving arms to bend
About his coarse robe; and from end to end
The sky was bright with a big moon, but he
Roamed through the dim-lit realms of phantasy.
Was that the dawn-light on the hills afar?
Was that the gleaming of a morning-star?
Were those bright faces o'er him? So the pain
Grew gentle as he woke and slept again:
And then no more: only the curtained blue
Unfolding for the light to tremble through,
Only the sound of branches intertwined,

Only the sighing of a dolorous wind,
And the low music of the waking birds.

"More light! More light!" were the last dying words
Of Germany's great poet[85] as he lay
And saw the darkness gather on his day.
And "Light! More light!" is still the living cry
Of all who wait and watch with sleepless eye
The opening of the heavens: who calmly pace
A land of shadows with uplifted face,
Under the infinite silence, seeking still
Fire-chariots of God on every hill,
On every cloud an angel. And for these,
As the stars pale and the lone darkness flees,
Across the black verge of the troublous night
Breaks from the far unseen a Dawn of light
That, wider than the wide unresting sea,
Grows bright and brighter everlastingly.

85 Goethe.

Appendix D. Review of "The Newdigate," *Oxford Magazine*, May 25, 1887, pp. 232-233.

THE NEWDIGATE.

When Gwendolen Harleth,[86] wishing to be an actress rather than a governess, civilly remarked that she could at least act as well as many professionals she had seen, Klesmer, the musician, replied "Ah, my dear young lady, that is the cheap criticism of the buyer!" This memorable warning should be bound upon the frontlets of all critics: and the present reviewer—who is conscious that he could as soon fly as win the Newdigate—wishes to premise that he does not forget it; that any faults he may find are, he is aware, only the "cheap criticisms of the buyer," or (let us rather say) the gratuitous criticisms of the man to whom the Newdigate has been presented.

We think the readers of Prize Poems will note with satisfaction that Mr. Alexander has this year somewhat innovated on the recent tradition of Newdigates. The poetic melancholy and weariness is less insisted on: other things are admired besides yellow hair, flowers, and tragedy: fewer things than usual are "wan" and "faint"; and generally speaking the style, while it has not less taste, melody, and picturesqueness than some of the best of its predecessors, is more simple, restrained, and unobtrusive.

Mr. Alexander has one difficulty to deal with in the fact that his subject has already been beautifully and impressively treated in *The Light of Asia.* This cuts him off, as he explains in the preface, from many of the most picturesque legends. The result is that the scheme of his poem is rather fragmentary. It consists of—the overture; the cathedral of Lhassa; Buddha's early life, and the renunciation of home; the revelation under the Boh-tree (what is a Boh-tree?); and his death. The intervals are rather slurred, perhaps; but in a short piece where we can't have everything, it is on the whole best to have two or three pictures well worked out

The poet opens with a rather musical but somewhat obscure comparison, wherein the illumination of the present by the heroism of the past is compared to sunrise on a mountain. The effect of such light on our lives he describes in a happier simile: —

As, when a sunbeam trips across a lake,

86 In George Eliot's *Daniel Deronda* (1876).

And finds the water-lilies half awake
In the cool morning when the dewdrops shine
They bud and blossom like a hope divine.

The cathedral, with the gold Buddha enthroned therein, though carefully described from good authorities, somehow fails to interest us: we suspect it does not interest Mr. Alexander. With, the lofty pillars, fretted work of silver, slow moving files of priests, faint clouds, of incense, longdrawn aisles, &c., we are familiar. They are not peculiar to Buddha.

The boyhood of their hero, spent amid luxuries and delights which did not satisfy him, is described in lines which, if not very striking, are simple and pleasing. Only once the poet reminds us of the aesthetic school rather painfully:

No 'fancies from the flower-bells' stirred his soul:
No lotus-bud or flaming iris stole
One moment of his trouble: *all in vain*
White and red roses tried to soothe his pain.

One resents the introduction of a great poet's phrase amid these sentimental adornments and affectations : but perhaps, as Mr. Alexander is saying this was not true of Buddha, we ought to forgive him—especially as he does not err in the same way again. Anyhow, neither beauty nor joy can satisfy the youthful saint, and the reason is given us in some beautiful lines:

For he was one to whom on viewless wings
Come far-off visions of diviner things:
Who takes upon him, silent and alone,
The great world's griefs, and makes them all his own.

It is the fault of the legend and not the poet, that Buddha leaves his sleeping wife and child without farewell: a mere woman and baby are of no account, compared with the oriental saint's self-conquest. To think of the claims of the deserted ones shows the prosaic western mind; but as Mr. Alexander is writing for Westerns, we should have liked the motive of this cruelty more dwelt upon, so as to prevent the chilling of our sympathies. It is of no use for this purpose to compare Buddha to Orpheus; for he lost Eurydice because he couldn't help looking at her ("meet fault to be forgiven, might hell forgive"), not in order to go into a monastery, or carry out philanthropic schemes among the Thracians. But this is prosaic, as we said.

Then follow two descriptions of woodland or jungle scenes where the

ascetic philosopher muses: one before he has found the hollowness of his secluded life, and one after. The descriptions are written with melody and taste; but they are not specially significant in the story of Buddha, and are rather of the nature of picturesque and elegant padding. The second one, however, leads us up to the revelation under the boh-tree, which is the best passage in the poem. Mr. Alexander has generally some genuine poetic touch in his similes, and the two following similes introduce the crisis: —

As, when March winds blow rough, to English homes,

Before the cowslip buds, a swallow comes

Bearing the summer on his steely wings;

Or as, amid the twilight whisperings,

Far off we see, before the white moon rise,

A dream of moonlight on the tranquil skies.

So, he tells us, Buddha felt he was on the verge of his discovery. Then follows a wild night: phantoms arise—

Such as he alone could rightly tell
Who sang of Paradise twixt Heaven and Hell—

and visions of beauty too—

Beings dark-beauteous as the violet's gloom

And frailer than the opening hawthorn bloom.

(we have a dark suspicion that the poet means the -*blackthorn)*: but " all night he sat unmoved." Then comes the revelation:

Clearer the thought burned in him like a star

That not in measured rule, in bond and bar,

Not in vain scourging and in idle strife

With fleshly passions lies the truth of life,

But in large love and human sympathy,

In thought and deed of stedfast purity.

And in the strong uplifting of the soul

To self-distrust, self-conquest, self-control.

Then suddenly the vision-peopled air

Was empty, he alone left victor there.

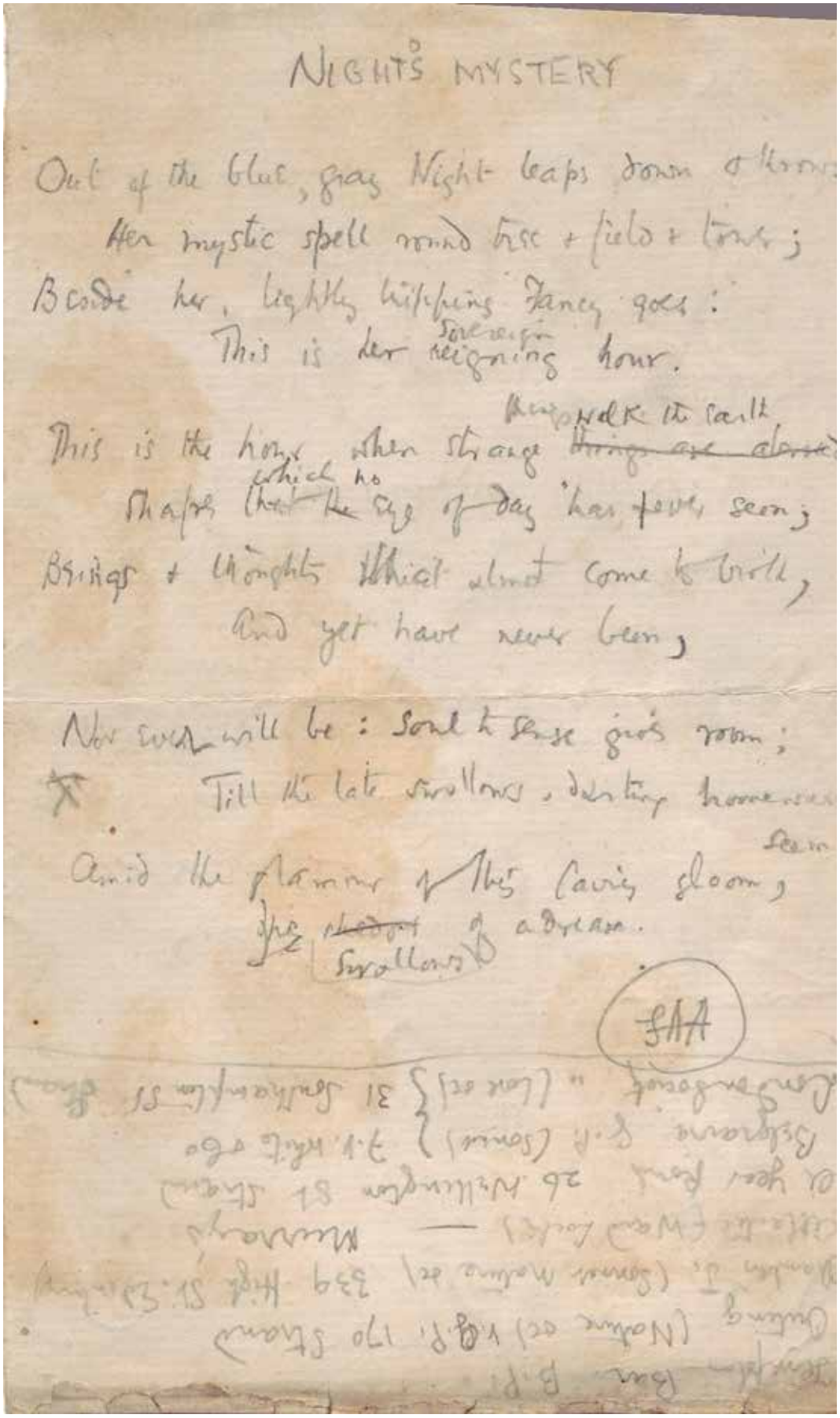
and the new day rises with new life and radiance and hope:

And in his heart a deep unbroken peace.

From this point the poet passes, with a glance at the later legends, to the last scene, the picture of Buddha's death, told in a few quiet but not ineffective lines; and ends well with a reference to Goethe's dying cry for "light," which is also the prayer of all the higher natures, though it may 'only be answered by the dawn of the last unending day.

There is, perhaps, nothing in the poem that exactly carries the reader away; there is also a certain want of edge and clearness in the narrative, and a tendency, as we have seen, to overdo the mere accessories of description—which even lands us once (p. 14) in a long sentence without a verb: but there is a sustained melody and grace, a general absence of affectation and false taste, and from time to time certain higher touches of imagination and expression which give to the simple and quiet style an air of finish and distinction.

Appendix E: Draft of "Night's Mystery" and a List of Magazines and Publishers:



NIGHT'S MYSTERY

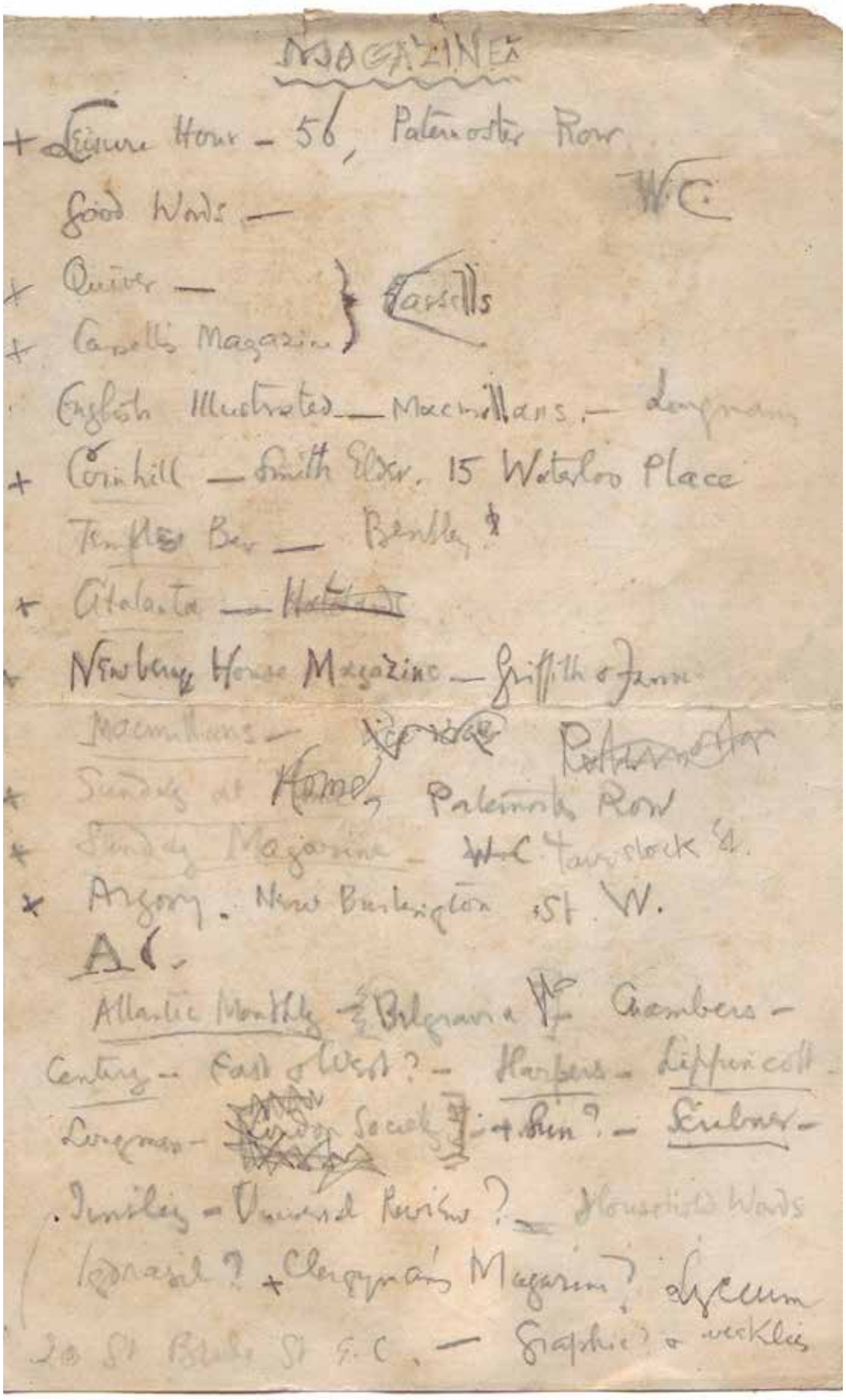
Out of the blue, gray Night leaps down o'erhead
Her mystic spell round tree + field + town;
Beside her, lightly whispering fancy goes:
This is her sovereign reigning hour.

This is the hour when strange ~~things are done~~ Darkness walk is said
Shapes that no eye of day has ever seen;
Which
Brings + thoughts which almost come to birth,
And yet have never been,

Nor ever will be: Soul to soul goes room;
Till the late swallows, darting homeward
Amid the glamour of this fairy gloom,
Seem
The ~~magic~~ Swallows of a Dream.

SHA

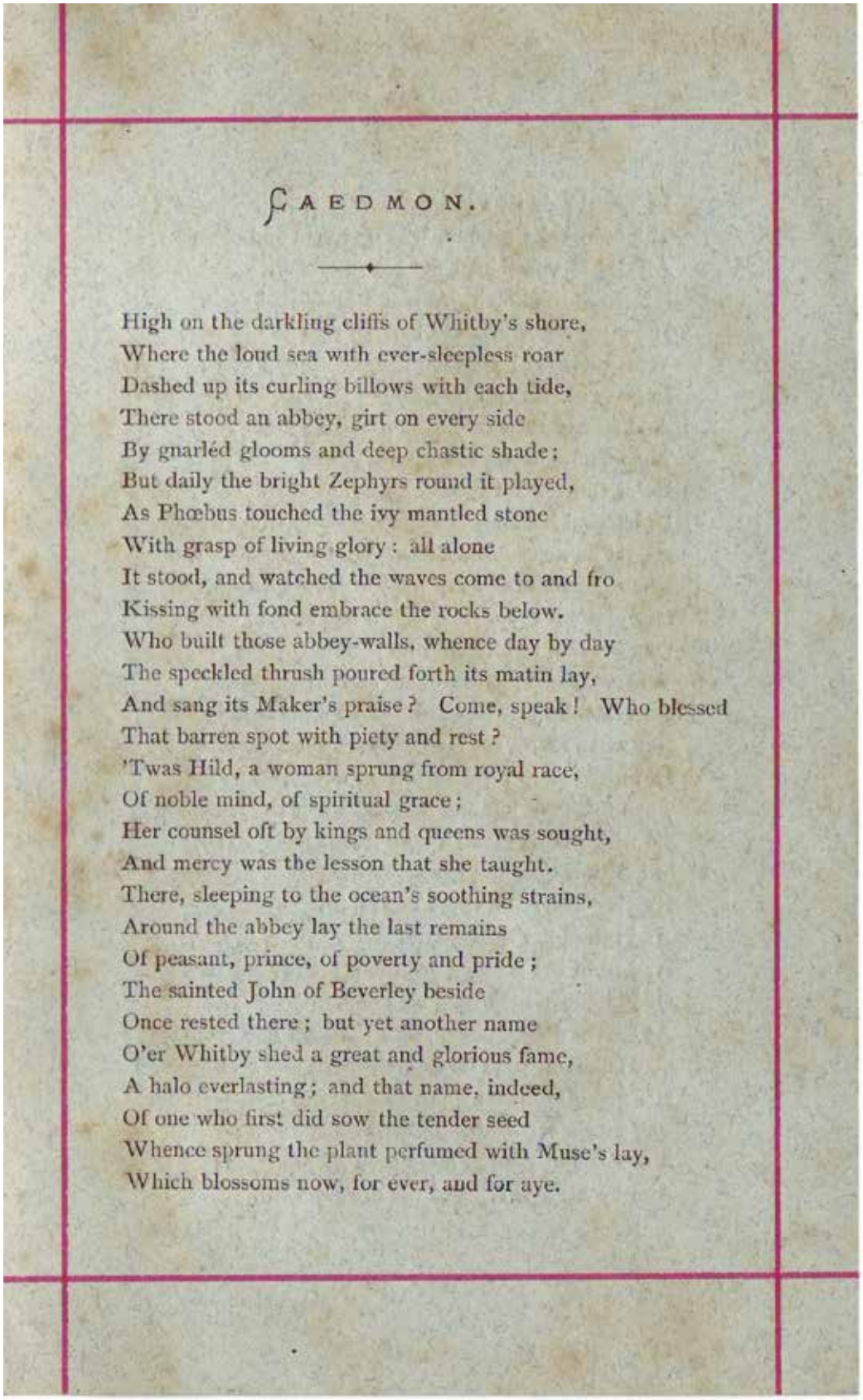
Bellevue P.O. (Canada) 31 Shakespeare St. Stoke Newington
Belmont P.O. (Canada) 24 McLaughlin St. Stratford
Cambridge " (Canada) 339 High St. Sandwich
Chelsea P.O. (Canada) 170 Strand



MAGAZINES

+ Leisure Hour – 56, Paternoster Row
Good Words – W.C.
+ Quiver – } Cassells
+ Cassell's Magazine }
English Illustrated – Macmillans – Longmans
+ Cornhill – Smith Elder, 15 Waterloo Place
Temple Bar – Bentley
+ Atalanta – Hatchard
+ Newbery House Magazine – Griffith & Farran
Macmillans – Victoria Paternoster
+ Sunday at Home, Paternoster Row
+ Sunday Magazine – W.C. Tavistock St.
+ Argosy. New Burlington St. W.
A C.
Atlantic Monthly – Belgravia W. Chambers –
Century – East & West? – Harpers – Lippincott –
Longman – London Society? – Once a Week? – Scribner –
Temple – Universal Review? – Household Words
Leisure? + Clergyman's Magazine? Lyceum
20 St Bride St E.C. – Graphic? – weeklies

Appendix F: An Unrecorded Printing of "Caedmon":



CAEDMON.

High on the darkling cliffs of Whitby's shore,
Where the loud sea with ever-sleepless roar
Dashed up its curling billows with each tide,
There stood an abbey, girt on every side
By gnarléd glooms and deep chastic shade;
But daily the bright Zephyrs round it played,
As Phœbus touched the ivy mantled stone
With grasp of living glory: all alone
It stood, and watched the waves come to and fro
Kissing with fond embrace the rocks below.
Who built those abbey-walls, whence day by day
The speckled thrush poured forth its matin lay,
And sang its Maker's praise? Come, speak! Who blessed
That barren spot with piety and rest?
'Twas Hild, a woman sprung from royal race,
Of noble mind, of spiritual grace;
Her counsel oft by kings and queens was sought,
And mercy was the lesson that she taught.
There, sleeping to the ocean's soothing strains,
Around the abbey lay the last remains
Of peasant, prince, of poverty and pride;
The sainted John of Beverley beside
Once rested there; but yet another name
O'er Whitby shed a great and glorious fame,
A halo everlasting; and that name, indeed,
Of one who first did sow the tender seed
Whence sprung the plant perfumed with Muse's lay,
Which blossoms now, for ever, and for aye.

In Whitby dwelt a simple country swain,
The cowherd Cædmon, who o'er vale and plain
All day in safety kept the grazing flock,
His drink the brook, his seat a moss-clad rock,
His meal the wild-wood berries, ripe and brown,
Which danced before the breezes up and down
In leafy glades and hedge-rows far and wide,
And spread their fragrance round on every side.
Thus Cædmon lived in easeful peace, his sky
Ne'er clouded by a want, a care, or sigh.
Unlettered he, and, though bowed down by age,
As yet he ne'er had touched Arion's page,
Nor wooed Euterpe crowned with love serene,
Nor plucked the myrtle brown and laurel green.
One evening to a festival he went
Where all was mellow mirth and merriment,
And fast the jocund wassail-bowl went round:
But when above the laughter rose the sound
Of tuneful harp for each to sing a glee,
Then Cædmon left and wandered o'er the lea
To where there stood a barn of oak decayed;
What time the dimpled moon her course delayed,
Resting awhile on azure bed of air,
And round her skipped her starry sylphs so fair,
And from the sobbing sallows came the moan
Of Philomela mourning all alone.
At length did Cædmon reach the barn and stayed
One moment, then he entered quick and laid
His weary limbs on Nature's couch to rest—
The gentle earth with grass so softly drest—
A couch by Cædmon more than all preferred;
And by his side reposed the drowsy herd.

Soon Morpheus took his cruse of golden ore—
That cruse which holds a never-failing store—
And with two drops of incense sealed his eyes;
And when the fragrance as a mist did rise
It spread and curled in shapes of rosy hue,
Like sun-lit clouds, and shut the world from view.
But suddenly that mist was rent aside,
Those circling clouds no longer could abide,
For there before him stood a Figure bright
Arrayed in vesture all of snowy-white;
And on His head a crown of purest gold;
His countenance too dazzling to behold
As round His temples played a lambent beam
Which lumined all His limbs with lustrous gleam.
At length He spake in words of accent mild,
And greeted him by name and gently smiled:
"Come, Cædmon, sing to me."—An awestruck pause,
And Cædmon said "I cannot; for that cause
I left the feast." But He replied, "Come! sing
How God did first create each living thing."
And then from Cædmon's lips began to flow
A song of harmony and music low
Which charmed the silent air until, amazed,
In unison its dewy voice it raised;
As from a second Orpheus did that strain
Sweep o'er the midnight moor, the pathless plain.
The hours flew by in haste; when Cædmon rose,
Long time the sun had left his forced repose
And rode triumphant in the bright blue sky,
Chasing away the clouds with flashing eye;
But long ere Night had raised her darksome hand,
Before the abbess Hild did Cædmon stand,

And told his wondrous tale—a tale which proved
His heavenly grace and soul divinely moved,
Which stirred all hearts to marvel and rejoice,
And roused a prayer and praise in every voice.

* * *

Month pressed on month at Time's imperious calls—
And now we see within those abbey-walls
Cædmon a monk, beloved by all around,
By those in mind or body pained e'er found
Ready to help, to soothe, to sympathise,
To wipe the wanton tear from weeping eyes.

* * *

Another year; another moss-grown grave
Upon the rock that overhung the wave;
Another stride of Time who knows no rest;
Another stroke of Death, th' unbidden guest.
Yes, Cædmon's furrowed form lay there at last,
Sin, sorrow, self, and suffering surpassed;
His soul had fled to reach a happier land,
To sing more sweetly with the holy band.

S. A. A.

Poems -◇-

S. A. Alexander[1]

----◇----

1 In another hand, perhaps a bookseller's, is added "Sidney A. A---."

Poems

S. A. Alexander

Summer.

----◇----

Sweet summer like a glittering sprite
Floats down towards the earth,
The sun pours forth his radiance bright,
The stars beam in their mirth.

Sweet summer, come and bring with thee
Thine insects, fruits and flowers,
And all thy songsters, so may we
Enjoy thy golden hours.

Sweet summer, come with genial heat,
And kiss the bud so shy,
And then to make my joy complete
Smile down with bright blue sky.

Sweet summer, now within thy breast
The thrush pours forth its lay;
The linnet safely builds its nest
Amid the flow'ring brae.

Summer

Sweet summer like a glittering sprite
Floats down towards the earth;
The sun pours forth his radiance bright,
The stars beam in their mirth.

Sweet summer, come and bring with thee
Thine insects, fruits and flowers,
And all thy songsters, so may we
Enjoy thy golden hours.

Sweet summer, come with genial heat,
And Kiss the bud so shy,
And then to make my joy complete
Smile down with bright blue sky.

Sweet summer, now within thy breast
The thrush pours forth its lay;
The linnet safely builds its nest
Amid the flow'ring bray.

Sweet summer, where thy radiant gown
Has swept o’er field and glen,
The crops grow ripe, the corn turns brown,
To cheer the hearts of men.

Sweet summer, always firm and true
To thee shall be my heart –
But, ah! when Autumn comes anew,
Then thou and I must part.

July, 1881.

----◇----

Sweet summer, where thy radiant gown
Has swept o'er field and glen,
The crops grow ripe, the corn turns brown,
To cheer the hearts of men.

Sweet summer, always firm and true
To thee shall be my heart –
But, ah! when Autumn comes anew,
Then thou and I must part.

July, 1881.

A Bird's Nest.

----◇----

A bird's nest – Oh! how wonderful and neat;
How carefully and choicely woven – meet
For kingly eyes – amid the grass so green,
O'ershadowed by a stately oak, between
Two clods of earth, as if reposing there
On dainty couch: within, three eggs so fair
That man's high art to equal tries in vain,
In all [their] beauty, lie. I turn again
And upwards gaze towards the bright blue sky;
There, far above me, far above on high
A skylark floats, on quiv'ring wing descends,
And with his joyous notes the heaven rends;
Notes like the tinkling of a silver bell –
Farewell, sweet skylark, now I say, farewell.

July, 1881.

----◇----

A Bird's Nest.

A bird's nest – Oh! how wonderful and neat;
How carefully and choicely woven – meet
For kingly eyes – amid the grass so green,
O'ershadowed by a stately oak, between
Two clods of earth, as if reposing there
On dainty couch: within, three eggs so fair
That man's high art to equal tries in vain,
In all beauty, lie. I turn again
And upwards gaze towards the bright blue sky;
There, far above me, far above on high
A skylark floats, on quiv'ring wing descends,
And with his joyous notes the heaven rends;
Notes like the tinkling of a silver bell –
Farewell, sweet skylark, now I say, farewell.

July, 1881.

A Spring Day.

----◇----

‘Twas a lovely day in the month of May,
O’er the woodland green I strolled,
Through the merry mere, by the streamlet clear,
And over the smiling wold.

On quiv’ring wing the lark did sing
His strain at the Heavenly gate:
The thrush so gay poured forth his lay
To cheer his brooding mate.

In a shady dell, sweet Philomel
Was chanting his plaintive song;
Cuckoo! cuckoo! I heard anew,
The neighbouring trees among.

In wonder I stood in the flow’ring wood
On the edge on the grassy sward;
I stood there amazed, and joyfully gazed
On the wonderful works of the Lord. July, 1881.

A Spring Day.

'Twas a lovely day in the month of May,
O'er the woodland green I strolled,
Through the merry mere, by the streamlet clear,
And over the smiling wold.

On quiv'ring wing the lark did sing
His strain at the Heavenly gate:
The thrush so gay poured forth his lay
To cheer his brooding mate.

In a shady dell, sweet Philomel
Was chanting his plaintive song;
Cuckoo! cuckoo! I heard anew,
The neighbouring trees among.

In wonder I stood in the flow'ring wood
On the edge on the grassy sward;
I stood there amazed, and joyfully gazed
On the wonderful works of the Lord.

July,

A Storm at Sea.

----◇----

The storm-god spreads his hurtling wings,
And skims the sober skies,
On every side his summons flings,
~~Fasting~~ Fast panting as he flies;
And, when his trumpet-note speeds round,
The blue sky fades away,
The tripping billows lightly bound,
Expectant of the fray.

Then swift from East, West, South and North
The frowning clouds advance,
And, spurring onward, charge in wrath
With fierce and swarthy glance;
And, when in mad array they clash,
The gleaming fire bursts out –
But hark! How dreadful is the crash!
How terrible their shout!

A Storm at Sea.

The storm-god spreads his hurtling wings,
And skims the sober skies,
On every side his summons flings,
Fasting panting as he flies;
And, when his trumpet-note speeds round,
The blue sky fades away,
The tripping billows lightly bound,
Expectant of the fray.

Then swift from East, West, South and North
The frowning clouds advance,
And, spurring onward, charge in wrath
With fierce and swarthy glance;
And, when in mad array they clash,
The gleaming fire bursts out –
But hark! How dreadful is the crash!
How terrible their shout!

The waves leap high and higher still
With wild and eager might,
~~T~~[2]And stronger comes the longing thrill
To take part in the fight.
But ‘mid those moving mountains there
Behold! a frail ship groans,
Encompassed by the phantom air,
The winds[2] unearthly moans.

How can it ever reach the land
From out that seething main,
Or how escape that deadly hand
Which never strikes in vain?
The emigrants in huddled ranks
Listen with bated breath,
For only a few slender planks
Now separate from death.

2 Presumably a transcription error for “wind.”

The waves leap high and higher still
With wild and eager might,
And stronger comes the longing thrill
To take part in the fight.
But 'mid those moving mountains there
Behold! a frail ship groans,
Encompassed by the phantom air,
The winds unearthly moans.

How can it ever reach the land
From out that seething main,
Or how escape that deadly hand
Which never strikes in vain?
The emigrants in huddled ranks
Listen with bated breath,
For only a few slender planks
Now separate from death.

Yet on it goes and nears the bay,
Still distant from its home;
The crested waves dash up their spray,
And struggling shriek and foam;
Dark night comes on; the sea is hurled
Aloft to meet the sky;
An endless chaos is the world,
As though the damned are nigh!

* * * *

‘Tis morning: sweetly smiles the sun
Upon the ocean-streams
Which gently ripple as they run,
And twinkle in the beams.
No cloud bespecks the heaven blue
Which bend in arching wreath
And mark with joy their image true
Amid the waves beneath.

Yet on it goes and nears the bay,
Still distant from its home;
The crested waves dash up their spray,
And struggling shriek and foam;
Dark night comes on; the sea is hurled
Aloft to meet the Sky;
An endless chaos is the world,
As though the damned are nigh!

* * * *

'Tis morning: sweetly smiles the sun
Upon the ocean-streams
Which gently ripple as they run,
And twinkle in the beams.
No cloud bespeaks the heavens blue
Which bend in arching wreath
And mark with joy their image true
Amid the waves beneath.

But where, Oh! where that precious freight,
And where that vessel weak?
No sign is left to tell their fate,
Their agony to speak;
All, all are gone! All dashed away
By death's unsparing wing
To reach that world which lives for aye,
To meet their Lord and King.

Ah! he who trusts a slender bark
May learn, too late for cure,
That, e'en when near the harbour-mark,
He is not yet secure.
However calm Life's sea is now,
A storm ere long may rise
To which the stubborn heart must bow
With sad and downcast eyes.

----◇---- March, 1882.

But where, Oh! where that precious freight,
And where that vessel weak?
No sign is left to tell their fate,
Their agony to speak;
All, all are gone! All dashed away
By death's unsparing wing
To reach that world which lives for aye,
To meet their Lord and King.

Ah! he who trusts a slender bark
May learn, too late for cure,
That, e'en when near the harbour-mark,
He is not yet secure.
However calm life's sea is now,
A storm ere long may rise
To which the stubborn heart must bow
With sad and downcast eyes.

March, 1882.

Night and Morning.

----◇----

Dark Night is brooding o’er the earth;
The clouds speed on in mad array,
And shout “Away with joy and mirth,
Away with love and sport and play!”
While, hurtled by the gusty breeze,
The sobbing bushes cry and groan;
All hushed is Philomela’s moan,
As loudly sigh the swaying trees.

But see! the rosy-fingered Morn
Now opes the gate of Phoebus’ tent,
And soon the veil of Night is Torn
As forth the sun-god comes unpent;
And as he skims the azure plain,
Before his fiery glance in dread
The darkness, clouds and storm have fled,
And all is peace and rest again.

Night and Morning.

Dark Night is brooding o'er the earth;
The clouds speed on in mad array,
And shout "Away with joy and mirth,
Away with love, and sport and play!"
While, hurtled by the gusty breeze,
The sobbing bushes cry and groan;
All hushed is Philomela's moan,
As loudly sigh the Swaying trees.

But see! the rosy-fingered Morn
Now opes the gate of Phoebus' tent,
And soon the veil of Night is torn
As forth the sun-god comes unspent;
And as he skims the azure plain,
Before his fiery glance in dread
The darkness, clouds and storm have fled,
And all is peace and rest again.

So, when your life is overcast,
With clouds of sadness and despair;
When evil Fortune has made fast
Her sable shroud of poignant care;
When e'en the breeze of death seems sweet
To your o'erloaded weary heart,
And from this life you fain would part
A world unknown, unseen to meet:

Oh! then, I pray you, courage take;
Let Hope be e'er your guiding star
To lead you through Life's tangled brake,
When Peace and Happiness seem far;
Perchance Good Fortune soon may shower
Its beams of joy, and trouble fright –
Remember that the darkest hour
Oft comes before the dawn of light.

----◇----

April, 1882.

So, when your life is overcast,
With clouds of sadness and despair;
When evil Fortune has made fast
Her sable shroud of poignant care;
When e'en the breeze of death seems sweet
To your o'erloaded weary heart,
And from this life you fain would part
A world unKnown, unseen to meet:

Oh! then, I pray you, courage take;
Let Hope be e'er your guiding star
To lead you through Life's tangled brake,
When Peace and Happiness seem far;
Perchance Good Fortune soon may shower
Its beams of joy, and trouble flight—
Remember that the darkest hour
Oft comes before the dawn of light.

April, 1882.

Cædmon.

----◇----

Milton Prize Poem at St. Paul's School, Midsummer, 1882.[3]

----◇----

[Cædmon, 664 AD] [4]—[The most notable and wealthy of these houses [monasteries] was that of Streonoshalh,[5] where Hild, a woman of royal race, reared her abbey on the summit of the dark cliffs of Whitby, looking out over the Northern Sea. Whitby became the Westminster of the Northumbrian Kings; within its walls stood the tombs of Eadwine and of Osur, with nobles and queens grouped around them. Hild was herself a Northumberian Deborah, whose counsel was sought even by bishops and Kings; and the double monastery over which she ruled became a seminary of bishops and priests. The sainted John of Beverley was among her scholars. But the name which really throws glory over Whitby is the name of a cowherd from whose lips during the reign of Oswi flowed the first great English song. Though well advanced in years, Cædmon had learnt nothing of the art of verse, the alliterative jingle so common among his fellows, "wherefore being sometimes at feasts, when all agreed for glee's sake to sing in turn, he no sooner saw the harp come toward him than he rose from the board and turned homewards. Once when he had done thus, and gone from the feast to the stable where he had that night charge of the cattle, there appeared to him in his sleep One who said, greeting him by name, 'Sing, Cædmon, some song to me.' 'I cannot sing,' he answered, 'for this cause left I the feast and came hither.' He who talked with him answered, 'However that be, you shall sing to

3 See Appenxix F.

4 Square brackets in this section are Alexander's.

5 The Viking name for Whitby, in North Yorkshire, where Hilda (ca. 614-680) was the first abbess of the monastery. She encouraged Cædmon, a herder, to develop his gifts at poetry. As Alexander notes, the excerpt comes from John Richard Green's popular history, first published in 1874 and then expanded to four volumes.

Cædmon.

Milton Prize Poem at St. Paul's School, Midsummer, 1882.

edmon, 664 A.D.] _[The most notable and wealthy of these houses [monasteries]
was that of Streonoshalh, where Hild, a woman of royal race, reared her abbey
he summit of the dark cliffs of Whitby, looking out over the Northern Sea.
by became the Westminster of the Northumbrian Kings; within its walls stood the
s of Eadwine and of Oswi, with nobles and queens grouped around them.
was herself a Northumbrian Deborah, whose counsel was sought even by bishops
Kings; and the double monastery over which she ruled became a seminary
shops and priests. The sainted John of Beverley was among her scholars. But the
which really throws glory over Whitby is the name of a cowherd from whose
during the reign of Oswi flowed the first great English song. Though well advanced
ars, Cædmon had learnt nothing of the art of verse, the alliterative jingle so
non among his fellows," wherefore being sometimes at feasts, when all agreed
ke's sake to sing in turn, he no sooner saw the harp come towards him than
e from the board and turned homewards. Once when he had done thus, and
from the feast to the stable where he had that night charge of the cattle, there
ared to him in his sleep One who said, greeting him by name, 'Sing, Cædmon,
Sing to me.' 'I cannot sing,' he answered; 'for this cause left I the feast and
hither.' He who talked with him answered, 'However that be, you shall sing to

Me.' 'What shall I sing?' rejoined Cædmon. 'The beginning of created things,' replied He. In the morning the cowherd stood before Hild and told his dream. Abbess and brethren alike concluded 'that heavenly grace had been conferred on him by the Lord.' They translated for Cædmon a passage in Holy Writ, 'bidding him, if he could, put the same into verse. The next morning he gave it them composed in excellent verse, whereon the abbess, understanding the divine grace in the man, bade him quit the secular habit and take on him the monastic life." Piece by piece the sacred story was thus thrown into Cædmon's poem. "He sang of the creation of the world, of the origin of man, and of all the history of Israel; of their departure from Egypt and entering into the Promised Land; of the incarnation, passion and resurrection of Christ and of his ascension; of the terror of future judgment, the horror of hell-pangs, and the joys of heaven" –from J.R. Green's "Short History of the English People."]

----◇----

High on the darkling cliffs of Whitby's shore,

Where the loud sea with ever-sleepless roar

Dashed up its curling billows with each tide,

There stood an abbey, girt on every side

By gnarlèd glooms and deep chaotic shade;

But daily the bright Zephyrs round it played

As Phoebus touched the ivy-mantled stone

With grasp of living glory: all alone

It stood, and watched the waves come to and fro

Me. 'What shall I sing?' rejoined Cædmon. 'The beginning of created things' replied He. In the morning the cowherd stood before Hild and told his dream. Abbess and brethren alike concluded 'that heavenly grace had been conferred on him by the Lord'. They translated for Cædmon a passage in Holy Writ, bidding him if he could, put the same into verse. The next morning he gave it them composed in excellent verse, whereon the abbess, understanding the divine grace in the man, bade him quit the secular habit and take on him the monastic life". Piece by piece the sacred story was thus thrown into Cædmon's poem. "He sang of the creation of the world, of the origin of man, and of all the history of Israel; of their departure from Egypt and entering into the Promised Land; of the incarnation, passion and resurrection of Christ and of his ascension; of the terror of future judgment, the horror of hell-pangs, and the joys of Heaven" – from J.R. Green's "Short History of the English People"]

High on the darkling cliffs of Whitby's shore,
Where the loud sea with ever-sleepless roar
Dashed up its curling billows with each tide,
There stood an abbey, girt on every side
By gnarled glooms and deep chaotic shade;
But daily the bright Zephyrs round it played
As Phoebus touched the ivy-mantled stone
With grasp of living glory: all alone
It stood, and watched the waves come to and fro

Kissing with fond embrace the rocks below.
Who built those abbey-walls whence day by day
The speckled thrush poured forth its matin lay
And sang its Maker's praise? Come, speak! Who blessed
That barren spot with piety and rest?
'Twas Hild, a woman sprung from royal race,
Of noble mind, of spiritual grace;
Her counsel oft by kings and queens was sought,
And mercy was the lesson that she taught.
There, sleeping to the ocean's soothing strains,
Around the abbey lay the last remains
Of peasant, prince, of poverty and pride,
The sainted John of Beverley beside
Once rested there; but yet another name
O'er Whitby shed a great and glorious fame,
A halo everlasting; and that name, indeed,
Of one who first did sow the tender seed
Whence sprung the plant perfumed with Muse's lay,
Which blossoms now, for ever, and for aye.
    In Whitby dwelt a simple country swain,
The cowherd Cædmon, who–o'er vale and plain [–]
All day in safety kept the grazing flock,
His drink the brook, his seat a moss-clad rock,

Kissing with fond embrace the rocks below.
Who built those abbey-walls whence day by day
The speckled thrush poured forth its matin lay
And sang its Maker's praise? Come, speak! Who blessed
That barren spot with piety and rest?
'Twas Hild, a woman sprung from royal race,
Of noble mind, of spiritual grace;
Her counsel oft by Kings and queens was sought,
And mercy was the lesson that she taught.
There, sleeping to the ocean's soothing strains,
Around the abbey lay the last remains
Of peasant, prince, of poverty and pride;
The sainted John of Beverley beside
Once rested there; but yet another name
O'er Whitby shed a great and glorious fame,
A halo Everlasting; and that name, indeed,
Of one who first did sow the tender seed
Whence sprung the plant perfumed with Muse's lay,
Which blossoms now, for ever, and for aye.

In Whitby dwelt a simple country swain,
The cowherd Caedmon, who o'er vale and plain
All day in safety kept the grazing flock,
His drink the brook, his seat a moss-clad rock,

His meal the wildwood berries, ripe and brown,
Which danced before the breezes up and down
In leafy glades and hedge-rows far and wide,
And spread their fragrance round on every side.
Thus Cædmon lived in easeful peace, his sky
Ne'er clouded by a want, a care or sigh;
Unlettered he, and, though bowed down by age,
As yet he ne'er had touched Arion's page[6],
Nor wooed Euterpe[7] crowned with love serene,
Nor plucked the myrtle brown and laurel green.
One evening to a festival he went
Where all was mellow mirth and merriment,
And fast the jocund wassail-bowl went round;
But when above the laughter rose the sound
Of tuneful harp for each to sing a glee,
Then Cædmon left and wandered o'er the lea
To where there stood a barn of oak decayed;
What time the dimpled moon her course delayed
Resting awhile on azure bed of air,
And round her skipped her starry sylphs so fair,
And from the sobbing sallows came the moan
Of Philomela mourning all alone.
At length did Cædmon reach the barn and stayed

6 Arion was a legendary Greek poet, famed for his lyrical inventiveness.

7 The muse of lyric poetry.

His meal the wildwood berries, ripe and brown,
Which danced before the breezes up and down
In leafy glades and hedge-rows far and wide,
And spread their fragrance round on every side.
Thus Cadmon lived in easeful peace, his sky
Ne'er clouded by a want, a care or sigh;
Unlettered he, and, though bowed down by age,
As yet he ne'er had touched Arion's page,
Nor wooed Euterpe crowned with love serene,
Nor plucked the myrtle brown and laurel green.
One evening to a festival he went
Where all was mellow mirth and merriment,
And fast the jocund wassail-bowl went round;
But when above the laughter rose the sound
Of tuneful harp for each to sing a glee,
Then Cadmon left and wandered o'er the lea
To where there stood a barn of oak decayed;
What time the dimpled moon her course delayed
Resting awhile on azure bed of air,
And round her skipped her starry Sylphs so fair,
And from the sobbing sallows came the moan
Of Philomela mourning all alone.
At length did Cædmon reach the barn and stayed

One moment, then he entered quick and laid
His weary limbs ~~of~~ on Nature's couch to rest –
The gentle earth with grass so softly drest –
A couch by Cædmon more than all preferred;
And by his side reposed the drowsy herd.
Soon Morpheus took his cruse of golden ore –
That cruse which holds a never-failing store –
And with two drops of incense sealed his eyes;
And when the fragrance as a mist did rise
It spread and curled in shapes of rosy hue,
Like sun-lit clouds, and shut the world from view.
But suddenly that mist was rent aside,
Those circling clouds no longer could abide,
For there before him stood a Figure bright,
Arrayed in vesture all of snowy-white;
And on His head a crown of purest gold;
His countenance too dazzling to behold
As round His temples played a lambent beam
Which lumined all His limbs with lustrous gleam.
At length He spake in words of accent mild,
And greeted him by name and gently smiled:
"Come, Cædmon, sing to me" – An awestruck pause,
And Cædmon said "I cannot; for that cause

One moment, then he entered quick and laid
His weary limbs ~~of~~ on Nature's couch to rest –
The gentle earth with grass so softly drest –
A couch by Cædmon more than all preferred;
And by his side reposed the drowsy herd.
Soon Morpheus took his cruse of golden ore –
That cruse which holds a never-failing store –
And with two drops of incense sealed his eyes;
And when the fragrance as a mist did rise
It spread and curled in shapes of rosy hue,
Like sun-lit clouds, and shut the world from view.
But suddenly that mist was rent aside,
Those circling clouds no longer could abide;
For there before him stood a Figure bright,
Arrayed in vesture all of snowy-white;
And on His head a crown of purest gold;
His countenance too dazzling to behold
As round His temples played a lambent beam
Which lumined all His limbs with lustrous gleam.
At length He spake in words of accent mild,
And greeted him by name and gently smiled:
"Come, Cædmon, sing to me" – An awestruck pause,
And Cædmon said "I cannot; for that cause

I left the feast.” But He replied “Come! sing
How God did first create each living thing.”
And then from Cædmon’s lips began to flow
A song of harmony and music low
Which charmed the silent air until, amazed,
In unison its dewy voice it raised;
As from a second Orpheus did that strain
Sweep o’er the midnight moor, the pathless plain.
The hours flew by in haste; when Cædmon rose,
Longtime the sun had left his forced repose
And rode triumphant in the bright blue sky,
Chasing away the clouds with flashing eye;
But long ere Night had raised her darksome hand,
Before the abbess Hild did Cædmon stand,
And told his wondrous tale – a tale which proved
His heavenly grace and soul divinely moved,
Which stirred all hearts to marvel and rejoice,
And roused a prayer and praise in every voice.

* * * * *

Month pressed on month at Time’s imperious calls –
And now we see within those abbey-walls
Cædmon a monk, beloved by all around,
By those in mind or body pained e’er found

I left the feast." But He replied "Come! Sing
How God did first create each living thing."
And then from Caedmon's lips began to flow
A song of harmony and music low
Which charmed the silent air until, amazed,
In unison its dewy voice it raised;
As from a second Orpheus did that strain
Sweep o'er the midnight moor, the pathless plain.
The hours flew by in haste, when Caedmon rose,
Longtime the sun had left his forced repose
And rode triumphant in the bright blue sky,
Chasing away the clouds with flashing eye;
But long ere Night had raised her darksome hand,
Before the abbess Hild did Caedmon stand,
And told his wondrous tale - a tale which proved
His heavenly grace and soul divinely moved,
Which stirred all hearts to marvel and rejoice,
And roused a prayer and praise in every voice.

* * * * * *

Month pressed on month at Time's imperious calls -
And now we see within those abbey-walls
Caedmon a monk, beloved by all around,
By those in mind or body pained e'er found

Ready to help, to soothe, to sympathise,

To wipe the wanton tear from weeping eyes.

* * * * * *

Another year; another moss-grown grave

Upon the rock that overhung the wave:

Another stride of Time who knows no rest;

Another stroke of Death, th' unbidden guest.

Yes, Cædmon's furrowed form lay there at last,

Sin, sorrow, self and suffering surpassed;

His soul had fled to reach a happier land,

To sing more sweetly with the holy band.

----◇----

Feb – June, 1882.

Ready to help, to soothe, to sympathise,
To wipe the wanton tear from weeping eyes.

* * * * * *

Another year; another moss-grown grave
Upon the rock that overhung the wave:
Another stride of Time who knows no rest;
Another stroke of Death, th' unbidden guest.
Yes, Cadmon's furrowed form lay there at last,
Sin, sorrow, self and suffering surpassed;
His soul had fled to reach a happier land,
To sing more sweetly with the holy band.

Feb – June, 1852.

The Seasons of Life.

----◇----

‘Tis Spring: a star-eyed maiden, as I gaze,
In sportive joy spurns fast the fleeting days –
Her face the playground of the sun’s bright rays.

‘Tis Summer: childhood’s bloom ere now has flown;
But other flowers of other hues are strown;
With love the sun’s bright rays have brighter grown.

Now Autumn comes: the flowers are fading fast,
Their lustre gone, their brightness now is past;
The rays are growing faint and dim at last.

Dark winter closes: the bright rays have fled;
The light is gone, the blossoms all are dead,
But she to Spring, to endless Spring, has sped.

----◇----

July 16th, 1882.

The Seasons of Life.

'Tis Spring: a star-eyed maiden, as I gaze,
In sportive joy spurns fast the fleeting days –
Her face the playground of the sun's bright rays.

'Tis Summer: childhood's bloom ere now has flown;
But other flowers of other hues are strown;
With love the sun's bright rays have brighter grown.

Now Autumn comes: the flowers are fading fast,
Their lustre gone, their brightness now is past:
The rays are growing faint and dim at last.

Dark winter closes: the bright rays have fled;
The light is gone, the blossoms all are dead;
But she to Spring, to endless Spring, has sped.

July 16th, 1802.

Some Thoughts on the Soul.

----◇----

No soul is perfect; either outward cares
Do trammel its swift soarings, or within
Some stain exists like blight upon a rose,
Which, if it be not hindered, soon may spread
And with its foulness wither all the flower
And e'en corrupt, perchance, the neighbouring buds.
A hardened soul by sorrow grows more hard;
A gentle one is sweetened, and receives
A warmer, purer glow; and such a one
Looks at all things in wider, truer lights;
Whereas a meaner soul no pleasure takes
In seeking Truth, and even though sometimes
It knocketh at Truth's door, it goes away
Before 'tis oped, nor waiteth a reply.
Sins blasts an unprotected human soul
Like frost a tender plant; and all the more
Does that plant feel its fierce and deadly force
If highly-nurtured, in a hot-house grown.
Train, then, thy soul, for 'tis a creeping vine

Some Thoughts on the Soul.

No soul is perfect; either outward cares
Do trammel its swift soarings, or within
Some stain exists like blight upon a rose,
Which, if it be not hindered, soon may spread
And with its foulness wither all the flower
And e'en corrupt, perchance, the neighbouring buds.
A hardened soul by sorrow grows more hard;
A gentle one is sweetened, and receives
A warmer, purer glow; and such a one
Looks at all things in wider, truer lights;
Whereas a meaner soul no pleasure takes
In seeking Truth, and even though sometimes
It knocketh at Truth's door, it goes away
Before 'tis oped, nor waiteth a reply.
Sin blasts an unprotected human soul
Like frost a tender plant; and all the more
Does that plant feel its fierce and deadly force
If highly-nurtured, in a hot-house grown.
Train, then, thy soul, for 'tis a creeping vine

Which, trained with care, will high and higher climb,
But, if untended, crawl amid the mire;
Be sure that then no worthy fruit ‘twill bear
If trailing on the earth, impure and vile;
But train it high, and it will bring good ~~fortune~~ fruit,
Meeting the sun’s bright rays of faith and love,
And, far expanding, stretch its tendrils wide,
And other plants will aid to higher climb,
Keeping them upward in its upward growth.

----◇----

July 24, 1882

Which, trained with care, will high and higher climb.
But, if intended, crawl amid the mire;
Be sure that then no worthy fruit 'twill bear
If trailing on the earth, impure and vile;
But train it high, and it will bring good ~~fruit~~ fruit,
Meeting the sun's bright rays of faith and love,
And, far expanding, stretch its tendrils wide,
And other plants will aid to higher climb,
Keeping them upward in its upward growth.

July 24. 1882

Childhood.

----◇----

The little hopes and fears,
The rain and sunshine tears,
The softly-fleeting years –
All, all are past.

The tiny pattering feet,
The leafy garden seat,
The quaint old village-street –
All, all are past.

The pure and sinless mind,
The soul to evil blind,
The life by guilt unlined –
All, all are past.

Yes, all are past – I grieve,
When Life draws near its eve,
I mourn, with no reprieve,
The life that's past.

July 28th, 1882.

Childhood

The little hopes and fears,
The rain and sunshine tears,
The softly-fleeting years –
All, all are past.

The tiny pattering feet,
The leafy garden seat,
The quaint old village-street –
All, all are past.

The pure and sinless mind,
The soul to evil blind,
The life by guilt unlined –
All, all are past.

Yes, all are past – I grieve,
When Life draws near its eve,
I mourn, with no reprieve,
The life that's past.

July 28th, 1882.

The Nightingale's Song.

----◇----

When Night sits calm on ebon throne
Watching the earth and main,
There trembles on the air a moan,
The nightingale's sad strain;
On the fretted boughs he sits alone,
Hid in his own refrain.

Fast notes pour forth as if to rob
The heart of its little ease,
And slowly melt in a quavering sob
Which falters on the breeze,
Then die away in a heart-sick throb
That thrills the silent leas.

But suddenly the quivering ears
More gladsome accents smile,
As if amid this world's dark fears
Visions of Heaven's delight
Had swept his mind, had chased his tears,
And cheered his lonely plight.

The Nightingale's Song.

When Night sits calm on ebon throne
Watching the earth and main,
There trembles on the air a moan,
The nightingale's sad strain;
On the fretted boughs he sits alone,
Hid in his own refrain.

Fast notes pour forth as if to rob
The heart of its little ease,
And slowly melt in a quavering sob
Which falters on the breeze,
Then die away in a heart-sick throb
That thrills the silent leas.

But suddenly the quivering ears
More gladsome accents smite,
As if amid this world's dark fears
Visions of Heaven's delight
Had swept his mind, had chased his tears,
And cheered his lonely plight.

The wildest carols quickly bear
Their music through the dell
Like vocal incense on the air,
With oft a changeful swell;
Then, languishing in cadence fair,
Die in one last low knell.

----◇----

July 29th, 1882.

The wildest carols quickly bear
Their music through the dell
Like vocal incense on the air,
With oft a changeful swell;
Then, languishing in cadence fair,
Die in one last low knell.

July 29th, 1882.

Sunset

----◇----

The rooks, arrayed in long and marshalled line,
Were homewards wending fast their cawing flight;
All nature was prepared, save man alone,
To meet the darksome advent of the Night.

The sun was sinking to his restless nest,
And glinting all the hills with gorgeous gold;
His beams refulgent shot from out his orb,
As in the west his ruddy wheel he rolled.

Upon the little village thick they gleamed,
Which lay embosomed on the verdant hill,
Nestling amid a leafy slope of trees
Whose tops were reared aloft all calm and still.

They kissed the old and hoary village-church,
With lichens green and velvet mosses drest,
Its walls with trailing ivy clasped around,
Wherein full many a songster owned a nest.

Sunset.

The rooks, arrayed in long and marshalled line,
Were homewards wending fast their cawing flight;
All nature was prepared, save man alone,
To meet the darksome advent of the Night.

The sun was sinking to his restless rest,
And glinting all the hills with gorgeous gold;
His beams refulgent shot from out his orb,
As in the west his ruddy wheel he rolled.

Upon the little village thick they gleamed,
Which lay embosomed on the verdant hill,
Nestling amid a leafy slope of trees
Whose tops were reared aloft all calm and still.

They Kissed the old and hoary village-church,
With lichens green and velvet mosses drest,
Its walls with trailing ivy clasped around,
Wherein full many a songster owned a nest.

They smiled upon the seat beneath the oak,
Whereon a maid and youth sat hand-in-hand,
While Cupid hovered round on rosebud wings
To join them in his sweet yet iron band.

They glittered on the smooth, virescent plains,
With flowers, herbs and grass all fragrant fair,
And on the gentle kine and fleecy sheep
Which gladly bowed them to Night's kindly care.

They glistened on the little cottage-homes,
Upon the sick man's bed, the rich man's wealth,
On hope and fear, on happiness and grief,
On riches, sickness, poverty and health.

They sparkled on the children at the doors
Whiling in joyful sport the fleeting hours,
And on the tiny plots so small in size,
So nicely tended, and so full of flowers!

They smiled upon the seat beneath the oak,
Whereon a maid and youth sat hand-in-hand,
While Cupid hovered round on rosebud wings
To join them in his sweet yet iron band.

They glittered on the smooth, virescent plains,
With flowers, herbs and grass all fragrant fair,
And on the gentle Kine and fleecy sheep
Which gladly bowed them to Night's Kindly care.

They glistened on the little cottage-homes,
Upon the sick man's bed, the rich man's wealth,
On hope and fear, on happiness and grief,
On riches, sickness, poverty and health.

They sparkled on the children at the doors
Whiling in joyful sport the fleeting hours,
And on the tiny plots so small in size,
So nicely tended, and so full of flowers!

They twinkled on the clearly-laughing stream
That ran and rippled through the flow'ry meads,
Its dimpled water rushing free and fast
Along its banks, and singing on the reeds.

They flashed upon the waves of golden corn,
And on the billows of the heaving sea,
Which girt the fields with all-resistless arm,
While with its spray it almost splashed the lea.

They beamed impartial on the happy face,
The calm and peaceful scene, the cheerful nook,
And on the sad and sorrow-stricken brow,
The cheerless home, the fierce and sullen look.

But now the sun sank low and lower still
And with one long fond glance bore off the day;
The last beams tottered on the sea-washed crags,
And with a fading glimmer died away.

They twinkled on the clearly-laughing stream
That ran and rippled through the flow'ry meads,
Its dimpled wake rushing free and fast
Along its banks, and singing on the reeds.

They flashed upon the waves of golden corn,
And on the billows of the heaving sea
Which girt the fields with all-resistless arm,
While with its spray it almost splashed the lea.

They beamed impartial on the happy face,
The calm and peaceful scene, the cheerful nook,
And on the sad and sorrow-stricken brow,
The cheerless home, the fierce and sullen look.

But now the sun sank low and lower still
And with one long fond glance bore off the day;
The last beams tottered on the sea-washed crags.
And with a fading glimmer died away.

Sweet rays of sympathy and kindly love,

We love you as a friend, a precious prize;

You come to soothe, to comfort and to cheer,

To bear a gladsome message from the skies.

----◇----

July 31st, 1882.

Sweet rays of sympathy and kindly love,
We love you as a friend, a precious prize;
You come to soothe, to comfort and to cheer,
To bear a gladsome message from the skies.

July 31st, 1882.

Autumn Leaves

----◇----

I.

Half of summer, half of winter,
Bringing pleasure, bringing grief,
Autumn's gifts are spread around us
Leaf on leaf;
Russet brown and red and yellow,
Touched with changing tint and shade,
Tripping lightly to each Zephyr
Through the glade.

II.

Yet they are, for all their beauty,
Nought but drooping, withered, old,
By Time's fickle brushes painted,
In Death's hold;
And they warn us how deceiving
Are the things upon this earth,
And how very near the death-bed
Is to birth.

Sep. 9th, 1882.

Autumn Leaves

I.

Half of summer, half of winter,
Bringing pleasure, bringing grief,
Autumn's gifts are spread around us
Leaf on leaf;
Russet brown and red and yellow,
Touched with changing tint and shade,
Tripping lightly to each Zephyr
Through the glade.

II.

Yet they are, for all their beauty,
Nought but drooping, withered, old,
By Time's fickle brushes painted,
In Death's hold;
And they warn us how deceiving
Are the things upon this earth,
And how very near the death-bed
Is to birth.

Sept. 9th, 1882.

November

----◇----

I.

A rustling murmur clambers through the trees;
The leaves in anguish are no longer dumb,
For whispered sighs tell of their agonies,
As though they know that their last hour is come:
The days of Spring they can no more remember,
But every sound that echoes o'er the leas,
And every tear-drop falling through the air
Repeats in mournful accents everywhere –
November!

II.

The birds are silent on the wrinkled bough;
The flowers all are withered and have died,
And show no more their tender leaflets now,
And their bright diadems, the Spring's first pride;
The sky puts on its grey to greet December;
The wind comes rushing o'er yon hillock's brow,
Chill as if loosed on Russia's steppes do drear;
And as it goes it whispers in my ear –
November!

November.

I

A rustling murmur clambers through the trees;
The leaves in anguish are no longer dumb,
For whispered sighs tell of their agonies,
As though they know that their last hour is come:
The days of Spring they can no more remember,
But every sound that echoes o'er the leas,
And every tear-drop falling through the air
Repeats in mournful accents everywhere—
November!

II.

The birds are silent on the wrinkled bough;
The flowers all are withered and have died,
And show no more their tender leaflets now,
And their bright diadems, the Spring's first pride;
The sky puts on its grey to greet December;
The wind comes rushing o'er yon hillock's brow,
Chill as if loosed on Russia's steppes so drear;
And as it goes it whispers in my ear—
November!

III.

Yet has this month a grandeur all its own:
The trees stand up in wild and rugged might,
Taunting the storm which soon around will moan,
As Ajax once defied Jove's rapid light –
Their leaves as brown as acorns in September;
The wind that wanders from the Northern zone
Feels crisp and cool, while, as it onward flies,
Over the glade, in sweeter tones it cries –
November!

----◇----

Sep. 18th, 1882

III

Yet has this month a grandeur all its own:
The trees stand up in wild and rugged might,
Taunting the storm which soon around will moan,
As Ajax once defied Jove's rapid light—
Their leaves as brown as acorns in September,
The wind that wanders from the Northern zone
Feels crisp and cool, while, as it onward flies,
Over the glade, in sweeter tones it cries—
November!

Sept. 18th, 1882

Nature and Poetry

----◇----

Amid the lushness of this floral grove
The beauty of the day had gently lain
    Until it was no more;
Even the gadding gnats had ceased to rove,
Had ceased to hold their dances light and vain –
    Their little life was o'er.

The twilight breeze that kissed the leaves ~~apart~~ aside,
Accompanied by the Thrush's vesper-hymn,
    Had lulled the day to rest;
And, as I crossed the grove, Tereus' sad bride,
By her first tunings from the darkness dim,
    Thrilled through my very breast.

The pensile leaves around and o'er my head
Together clasped their hands and loved to quell
    The light that strove to pass;
But here and there, with light and cautious tread
Moonbeams came trembling through and lightly fell
    Upon the velvet grass.

Nature and Poetry.

Amid the lushness of this floral grove
The beauty of the day had gently lain
Until it was no more;
Even the gadding gnats had ceased to rove,
Had ceased to hold their dances light and vain—
Their little life was o'er.

The twilight breeze that kissed the leaves ~~apart~~ aside,
Accompanied by the Thrush's vesper-hymn,
Had lulled the day to rest;
And, as I crossed the grove, Ceres' sad bride,
By her first tunings from the darkness dim,
Thrilled through my very breast.

The pensile leaves around and o'er my head
Together clasped their hands and loved to quell
The light that strove to pass;
But here and there, with light and cautious tread,
Moonbeams came trembling through and lightly fell
Upon the velvet grass.

And ever and anon I marked the beam
Of some bright-twinkling star in distant sky,
To darkness dealing death;
Then thought I, as I saw the dimness gleam, -
“Nature’s the only queen of Poesy,
Its life, its soul, its breath.”

----◇----

Sept. 24th, 1882.

And ever and anon I marked the beam
Of some bright-twinkling star in distant sky,
To darkness dealing death;
Then thought I, as I saw the dimness gleam,—
"Nature's the only queen of Poesy,
Its life, its soul, its breath."

Sep 24th, 1882.

Sonnet to a Daisy.

----◇----

Thou tiny flow'ret, waving in the breeze
Thy starry coronal, the meadow's gem,
The pale and pinky-glowing diadem,
Thou morn-awakened Daisy, in light ease
Reclining on the bosom of the leas
Thou show'st amid the grass thy broidered hem,
Nodding and smiling on thy gold-green stem,
And sometimes, too, coquetting with the bees.
Now tell me, daisy, whence were those hues won
That paint thy cheeks? – Come, tell the tale to me.
Are they Love's blushes? Or did once the sun
At setting throw his rosiness in thee?
I asked in vain the question – Day was done;
The flower had closed its eyes at Night's decree.

----◇----

Sep. 27th, 1882.

Sonnet to a Daisy.

Thou tiny flow'ret, waving in the breeze
Thy starry coronal, the meadow's gem,
The pale and pinky-glowing diadem,
Thou morn-awakened Daisy, in light ease
Reclining on the bosom of the leas
Thou show'st amid the grass thy broidered hem,
Nodding and smiling on thy gold-green stem,
And sometimes, too, coquetting with the bees.
Now tell me, daisy, whence were those hues won
That paint thy cheeks? - Come, tell the tale to me.
Are they Love's blushes? Or did once the sun
At setting throw his rosiness in thee?
I asked in vain the question - Day was done;
The flower had closed its eyes at Night's decree.

Sep. 27th, 1882.

A Hunting Song

----◇----

I.

What ho! What ho!
Merrily over the moors we go;
Oh! a hunter's sport is the sport for me,
So careless, joyous, fresh and free,
As cheerily, merrily over the moors ride we.
In the clear morn the bugle-horn
Comes gaily sounding on the plain;
But hark! again, again!
Blow high, blow low!
What ho! Tally-ho!
Merrily, cheerily
Over the moors we go.

A Hunting Song

I.

What ho! What ho!
Merrily over the moors we go;
Oh! a hunter's sport is the sport for me,
So careless, joyous, fresh and free,
As cheerily, merrily over the moors ride we.
In the clear morn the bugle-horn
Comes gaily sounding on the plain;
But hark! again, again!
Blow high, blow low!
What ho! Tally-ho!
Merrily, cheerily
Over the moors we go.

II.

What ho! What ho!

Cheerily over the moors we go,

Through bush and bramble, glade and glen,

Rousing the pheasant in marshy fen,

And startling the hare from its shady den;

While by swift bounds the trusty hounds

With eager jaw and panting hide

Rush baying on beside –

Bay loud, bay low!

What ho! Tally-ho!

Merrily, cheerily

Over the moors we go.

II.

What ho! What ho!
Cheerily over the moors we go.
Through bush and bramble, glade and glen,
Rousing the pheasant in marshy fen.
And startling the hare from its shady den.
While by swift bounds the trusty hounds
With eager jaw and panting hide
Rush baying on beside –
Bay loud, bay low!
What ho! Tally-ho!
Merrily, cheerily
Over the moors we go.

III.

What ho! What ho!
Merrily over the moors we go,
And fast the fox before us flies;
His brush is gleaming in our eyes,
While vainly to escape he tries;
On, on with speed, my gallant steed!
Across the hedge and o'er the rill,
By forest, field and hill –
Now high, now low –
What ho! Tally-ho!
Merrily, cheerily
Over the moors we go.

Oct., 1882.

----◇----

III.

What ho! What ho!
Merrily over the moors we go,
And fast the fox before us flies;
His brush is gleaming in our eyes,
While vainly to escape he tries;
On, on with speed, my gallant steed!
Across the hedge and o'er the rill,
By forest, field and hill—
Now high, now low—
What ho! Tally-ho!
Merrily, cheerily
Over the moors we go.

Oct., 1882.

Shadows.

----◇----

I.

The Day and Night now press a parting kiss
In twilight sadness, and the filmy eyes
Of Day grow dimmer in their mournful bliss,
While in his lover's glance soft tears arise.
The world looks sad, so sad, so drear,
And everything both far and near,
Wrapt round in sorrow and in silence lies.

II.

A soul sinks deeply 'neath its load of woe;
A heart in bitterness all vainly flies
The grief it cannot shun; where'er it go,
Dark Care hangs magnet-like before its eyes.
The world looks sad, so sad, so drear,
And everything both far and near,
Wrapt round in sorrow and in silence lies.

Shadows.

I.

The Day and Night now press a parting Kiss
In twilight sadness, and the filmy eyes
Of Day grow dimmer in their mournful bliss,
While in his lover's glance soft tears arise.
The world looks sad, so sad, so drear,
And everything both far and near,
Wrapt round in sorrow and in silence lies.

II.

A soul sinks deeply 'neath its load of woe;
A heart in bitterness all vainly flies
The grief it cannot shun; where'er it go,
Dark Care hangs magnet-like before its eyes.
The world looks sad, so sad, so drear,
And everything both far and near,
Wrapt round in sorrow and in silence lies.

III.

Maybe it is the twilight of despair
Soon, soon, too soon to deepen into night;
Maybe it is the dawn, the day-spring fair,
The sweet awakening into newer light;
And then the world no ~~long~~ more looks drear,
But everything both far and near,
Lies touched with beauty ~~an~~ new and pure delight.

----◇----

Oct. 22, 1882.

III.

Maybe it is the twilight of despair
Soon, soon, too soon to deepen into night;
Maybe it is the dawn, the day-spring fair,
The sweet awakening into newer light;
And then the world no ~~long~~ more looks drear,
But everything both far and near,
Lies touched with beauty ~~new~~ and pure delight.

Oct. 22, 1882.

Question and Answer.

----◇----

Gaily there came o’er the mountains a maiden
Bright as the morn;
Lightly she came tripping on, beauty-laden,
Thro’ the gold corn;
Bright were her cheeks with the blushes unceasing
Of sunset ne’er-setting but ever-increasing,
And looks love-lorn.

Her eyes had the calm of a twilight unending,
A dreamy delight,
Her glances as pure as a streamlet soft-wending
Its eddies of light;
Round all her features was blended a sweetness,
Round her light form, with a negligent neatness
Blossom-bedight.

Question and Answer.

Gaily there came o'er the mountains a maiden
Bright as the morn;
Lightly she came tripping on, beauty-laden,
Thro' the gold corn;
Bright were her cheeks with the blushes unceasing
Of sunset ne'er-setting but ever-increasing,
And looks love-lorn.

Her eyes had the calm of a twilight unending,
A dreamy delight.
Her glances as pure as a streamlet soft-wending
Its eddies of light;
Round all her features was blended a sweetness,
Round her light form, with a negligent neatness
Blossom-bedight.

Then ask'd I myself, as I saw Love enraptured
Out-beam from her eye:
"Oh! who can so soon her sweet spirit have captured?
For whom is that sigh?"
No answer I found till, with pulses fast-beating,
Ask'd I my own heart, and straight, with glad greeting,
It gave the reply!

----◇----

Oct. 22, 1882.

Then ask'd I myself, as I saw Love enraptured
Out-beam from her eye:
"Oh! who can so soon her sweet spirit have captured?
For whom is that sigh?"
No answer I found till, with pulses fast-beating,
Ask'd I my own heart, and straight, with glad greeting,
It gave the reply!

Oct 22. 1882

Clytie.[8]

----◇----

The grove was silent: the soft breeze that blew
Was voiceless in the night; the owl's weird cry
Had died in silence; the light aspen-leaves
Dropp'd their low curtseys with a noiseless grace;
On every hand the shadow'd meads lay dumb,
Streak'd with pale moonbeams.
All alone she stood;
The stars look'd silence on her, and the moon
Spread out its silver stillness at her feet.
She stood in grief: the gentle Zephyrs fann'd
Her wavy locks, and vainly tried to kiss
The tear-drops from her eyes. She stood alone,
With arms upstretch'd towards the distant blue;
And thus she gave her sorrow to the night:

"Ye Gods – if Gods there be, for now my woe
Has taught me to believe there are no Gods –
Yet must there be; I will not lose my faith
Thro' this my sorrow – O ye Gods above,

8 A water nymph who loved Apollo, who did not return her love, being taken with Daphne (who was indifferent to him). In despair, Clytie stripped and, refusing food and drink, sat for nine days on rocks while staring at the sun (Apollo). She was turned into a turnsole, a flower which in modern times is represented by the sunflower. George Frederick Watts (1817-1904) had sculpted Clytie in marble—he exhibited a version in bronze at the Grosvenor Gallery in 1881-1882, about the time of this poem. The British Museum displays a classical bust of Clytie of which copies were popular throughout the nineteenth century.

Clytie.

The grove was silent: the soft breeze that blew
Has voiceless in the night: the owl's weird cry
Had died in silence; the light aspen-leaves
Dropp'd their slow curtseys with a noiseless grace;
On every hand the shadow'd meads lay dumb,
Streak'd with pale moonbeams.

All alone she stood;
The stars look'd silence on her, and the moon
Spread out its silver stillness at her feet.
She stood in grief: the gentle Zephyrs fann'd
Her weary locks, and vainly tried to kiss
The tear-drops from her eyes. She stood alone.
With arms upstretch'd towards the distant blue;
And thus she gave her sorrow to the night:

"Ye Gods – if Gods there be. For now my woe
Has taught me to believe there are no Gods –
Yet must there be; I will not lose my faith
Thro' this my sorrow – O ye Gods above,

Look down and hear me, hear the mournful tale
Of mournful Clytie, avenge my wrong,
And help a lonely maiden in distress.
For I was lately sporting in the meads,
And merry-hearted joy'd to gaily dance
Among the ripples of my native stream;
I joy'd to stem its eddies with my hands;
I joy'd to wander on its flow'ry banks;
I joy'd to see the butterflies skim past,
And hear the merry songsters tune their lays.
But then, alas! there came a sudden change,
A wondrous change – I loved! My heart with love
Was fill'd, and all my thoughts were turn'd to love.
I loved, and bright Apollo loved me too,
And his heart beat in unison with mine.
Often we came together to this grove,
This very grove, to breathe our lasting love,
And wander hand-in-hand in careless bliss.
Ah! Woe is me! Would that it had not been!
Would that I had not lived or had not loved!
For he, the faithless and the treacherous,
He who had breathed so oft his tender vows,
Deserted me and ~~took another love~~, broke his plighted troth

Look down and hear me, hear the mournful tale
Of mournful Olifie, avenge my wrong,
And help a lonely maiden in distress.
For I was lately sporting in the meads,
And merry hearted joy'd to gaily dance
Among the ripples of my native stream;
I joy'd to stem its eddies with my hands;
I joy'd to wander on its flow'ry banks;
I joy'd to see the butterflies skim past,
And hear the merry songsters tune their lays.
But then, alas! there came a sudden change,
A wondrous change - I loved! My heart with love
Was fillèd, and all my thoughts were turn'd to love.
I loved, and bright Apollo loved me too,
And his heart beat in unison with mine.
Often we came together to this grove,
This very grove, to breathe our lasting love,
And wander hand-in-hand in careless bliss.
Ah! Woe is me! Would that it had not been!
Would that I had not lived or had not loved!
For he, the faithless and the treacherous,
He who had breathed so oft his tender vows,
Deserted me and ~~took another love~~ broke his plighted troth,

~~And left~~ Deserted me and took another love,
And left me desolate in pain and grief.
So now my heart is breaking, and I die."

She paused a moment like a faltering breeze,
And her sad voice re-echoed o'er the hills,
Like the far lonely weeping of the wind.
So went she on to draw her tangled thread
Of grievous story, till the night was done,
And faded into daylight; and the morn
Came lightly tripping on the eastern wave.

Then thus she tried once more to end her woe,
Standing, a fading shadow and alone:
"O now my heart is breaking, and I die:
I die, and still I care not for myself –
'Myself!' – and yet what mean I by 'myself'?
I am not I beneath this load of grief –
Ah! mournful Clytie, thy love thou mourn'st,
And not thyself; but if he came again,
He who deceived thee and deserted thee,
And said that he still loved, and loved thee well,
How would'st thou greet him? Would it be with scorn,

~~And left~~ Deserted me and took another love,
And left me desolate in pain and grief.
So now my heart is breaking, and I die."

She paused a moment like a faltering breeze,
And her sad voice re-echoed o'er the hills,
Like the far lonely weeping of the wind.
So went she on to draw her tangled thread
Of grievous story, till the night was done,
And faded into daylight; and the morn
Came lightly tripping on the eastern wave.

Then thus she tried once more to end her woe,
Standing, a fading shadow and alone:
"O now my heart is breaking, and I die:
I die, and still I care not for myself –
'Myself' – and yet what mean I by 'myself'?
I am not I beneath this load of grief –
Ah! mournful Clytie, thy love thou mournist,
And not thyself; but if he came again,
He who deceived thee and deserted thee,
And said that he still loved, and loved thee well,
How wouldst thou greet him? Would it be with scorn,

With indignation? Ah! no, no, I fear
That thou – that I – should once again right glad
Receive him to my bosom, and believe
That his love was as constant as my own.

But ah! what change, what change is this I feel
Slow stealing over me? I do not know,
Nor care I, if it be not the approach
Of Death, thrice welcome to this bursting heart.
O Death, on thy black pinions speedy fly,
And brood away my sorrow from my breast.

No more shall I now see the white clouds go;
No more shall hear the early thrushes pipe;
No more shall see the swallow twist his flight,
Bearing the summer on his steely wings;
No more shall trip amid my brook's cool waves,
Or watch the varied shadows in its depths:
For now my heart is breaking, and I die."

As thus she ended with a long-drawn sigh,
The day had blossom'd and the night-wind ceased;
A fragrant freshness swept across the earth,

With indignation? Ah! no, no, I fear
That thou - that I - should once again right glad
Receive him to my bosom, and believe
That his love was as constant as my own.

But ah! what change, what change is this I feel
Slow stealing over me? I do not know,
Nor care I, if it be not the approach
Of Death. thrice welcome to this bursting heart.
O Death, on thy black pinions speedy fly,
And brood away my sorrow from my breast.

No more shall I now see the white clouds go;
No more shall hear the early thrushes pipe;
No more shall see the swallow twist his flight,
Bearing the summer on his steely wings;
No more shall trip amid my brook's cool waves,
Or watch the varied shadows in its depths:
For now my heart is breaking, and I die".

As thus she ended with a long-drawn sigh,
The day had blossom'd and the night-wind ceased;
A fragrant freshness swept across the earth,

Like the soft perfume of a myriad buds;
Greeting the dawn. The sun came surging up,
And gazed upon her as she stood alone.
She felt a shudder o'er her; and the sun
Hid his bright face behind a rosy cloud;
And when he look'd again, she was not there;
But where she had been, stood a tall sunflower,
Bending its golden brightness to the breeze,
And ever gazing with a burning eye
Towards him as he circled thro' the air.

----◇----

Oct. 29, 30, 1882.

[The above was published in "The Pauline," Vol I. p. 55, 56, 57]

Published Dec. 1882.[9]

----◇----

9 *The Pauline*, 1:3 (December 1882), 55-57, signed "S. A. A." The square brackets here are Alexander's.

Like the soft perfume of a myriad buds.
Greeting the dawn. The sun came surging up,
And gazed upon her as she stood alone.
She felt a shudder o'er her; and the sun
Hid his bright face behind a rosy cloud;
And when he look'd again, she was not there;
But where she had been, stood a tall sunflower,
Bending its golden brightness to the breeze,
And ever gazing with a burning eye
Towards him as he circled thro' the air.

Oct 29, 30, 1882.

The above was published in "The Pauline", Vol I, p. 55, 56, 57]
published Dec. 1882.

A Lake by Moonlight

----◇----

Soft moonbeams with their silver fingers span
The lake's calm bosom: scarce an eddy ~~stirs~~ moves
The light that ~~pla~~ waves upon it, saving when
Some dappled ~~moon~~ trout up-stirs the lower blue,
And rolls a lazy ripple to the shore
To die in stillness.
The tall, slender elms,
That stud the moss-bank of the silent lake,
Quiver with argent lights. Their jagged leaves
Hang clear in crystal jets: yet not long since
They, pendent sharp against the redd'ning sky,
Took the last glory of the setting sun.
But now 'tis Night's still reign. The stars look down
And see their beauty bosom'd in the lake,
Shooting responsive sparkles. Here, the moon,
Cleaving the dark boughs of some tree that rims
The water, scatters shadows on the deep:
There, falling clear, with one pure flood of light
Spreads a smooth sheen of silver.

A Lake by Moonlight.

Soft moonbeams with their silver fingers span
The lake's calm bosom: scarce an eddy ~~stirs~~ moves
The light that ~~sta~~ waves upon it, saving when
Some dappled ~~moon~~ trout up-stirs the lower blue,
And rolls a lazy ripple to the shore
To die in stillness.

The tall, slender elms,
That stud the moss-bank of the silent lake,
Quiver with argent lights. Their jagged leaves
Hang clear in crystal jets: yet not long since
They, pendent sharp against the redd'ning sky,
Took the last glory of the setting sun.
But now 'tis Night's still reign. The stars look down
And see their beauty bosom'd in the lake,
Shooting responsive sparkles. Here, the moon,
Cleaving the dark boughs of some tree that rims
The water, scatters shadows on the deep:
There, falling clear, with one pure flood of light
Spreads a smooth sheen of silver.

The gold gorse,

Which makes bright fire upon the meads, now seems

Inlaid with moonbeams. Nigh, ~~br~~ a brooklet runs,

And, as it flows, gives whispers to its banks,

Like the low booming murmur of the wind

Across the crisping sands on lonely shores.

----◇----

Nov. 6th, 1882.

The gold gorse,
Which makes bright fire upon the meads, now seems
Inlaid with moonbeams. Nigh, a brooklet runs,
And, as it flows, gives whispers to its banks,
Like the low booming murmur of the wind
Across the crisping sands on lonely shores.

Nov. 6th, 1882.

Sonnet to Dean Colet[10]

----◇----

Colet, ‘twas thou who first for us didst thread
Minerva’s sacred steep, thro’ weary days,
Smoothing the roughness of its thorny ways;
Thou who didst drink Pieria’s fountain-head
So deeply, showing us its sparkling bed,
And toiling long to pluck the lofty bays,
To bring them nearer to our trembling gaze,
To teach us by thy footsteps where to tread.
Here where the echoes of thy voice still sound,
Where still thy monument of virtue stands,
Here may the reflex of thy deeds be found,
Here may thy precepts be our hearts’ commands;
And may deep thankfulness and grace abound,
To spread thy name and glory thro’ all lands.

Dec. 2nd, 1882.

----◇----

Published in the “Pauline”; No 4, Vol I pub. ~~Feb~~.Mar 5 1883.[11]

10 John Colet (1467-1519), Dean of St. Paul’s, Chaplain to Henry VIII, and, in 1512, the endower of St. Paul’s School. The poem may have been stimulated by the biographical vignettes appearing in *The Pauline*, one of which appeared in the December 1882 issue (1:3; 50-51), which also printed Alexander’s “Clytie.”

11 P. 82, signed “S. A. A.,” in the issue dated February 1883, but no doubt issued March 5.

Sonnet to Dean Colet.

Colet, 'twas thou who first for us didst thread
Minerva's sacred steep, thro' weary days,
Smoothing the roughness of its thorny ways;
Thou who didst drink Pieria's fountain-head
So deeply, showing us its sparkling bed,
And toiling long to pluck the lofty bays.
To bring them nearer to our trembling gaze,
To teach us by thy footsteps where to tread.
Here where the echoes of thy voice still sound,
Where still thy monument of virtue stands,
Here may the reflex of thy deeds be found.
Here may thy precepts be our hearts' commands;
And may deep thankfulness and grace abound,
To spread thy name and glory thro' all lands.

Dec. 2nd

Published in the "Pauline", No 4, Vol I, pub. May 5 Feb. 1883.

Anchored.

----◇----

I.

Where smote the sea with surging roar
Upon the sullen strand,
There near the shore
A little boat at anchor lay
And toss'd and toss'd amid the spray
Which scatter'd on the land
With mingled foamings of the waves and sand.

II.

A tiny anchor held it tight,
Fast by a slender chain
Which caught the light:
But should that anchor once give way,
Or that ~~anchor~~ chain break, it could not stay,
But, hurl'd with pitch and strain,
Would sink amid the thunders of the main.

Anchored.

I.

Where smote the sea with surging roar
Upon the sullen strand,
There near the shore
A little boat at anchor lay
And toss'd and toss'd amid the spray
Which scatter'd on the land
With mingled foamings of the waves and sand.

II.

A tiny anchor held it tight,
Fast by a slender chain
Which caught the light:
But should that anchor once give way,
Or that ~~anchor~~ chain break, it could not stay,
But, hurl'd with pitch and strain,
Would sink amid the thunders of the main.

III.

So, oft amid the surge of life,
When cares are heavy, we
Are worn with strife;
But Love's small anchor bids us wait –
Or else we should rush on our fate,
Out to the boundless sea
To meet the vast waves of Eternity.

----◇----

Jan: 4th, 1883.

III.

So, oft amid the surge of life.
When cares are heavy, we
Are worn with strife;
But Love's small anchor bids us wait—
Or else we should rush on our fate,
Out to the boundless sea
To meet the vast waves of Eternity.

Jan. 4th, 1883.

-Sonnet-

Life and Death.

----◇----

Methought, the while I mused, before mine eye,
Born of free fancy, stood an angel-sprite,
Flush'd with that hue which throws the eastern light
When matin glories mantle in the sky:
But, as I look'd, a formless shape pass'd by,
Unseen till gone; and that ethereal sight
Became a mystery so wondrous bright
That naught of more my dimm'd gaze might descry
So is it when we leave the world of dreams;
~~So, in~~ So, in the issues of mankind, we see
That Life is but a radiance which gleams
With beauty from a far-off Majesty;
That, with a power which is not what it seems,
Death changes Life into Eternity.

----◇----

March 11th, 1883

- Sonnet -

Life and Death.

Methought, the while I mused, before mine Eye,
Born of free fancy, stood an angel-sprite,
Flush'd with that hue which throws the eastern light
When matin glories mantle in the sky:
But, as I look'd, a formless shape pass'd by,
Unseen till gone; and that ethereal sight
Became a mystery so wondrous bright
That naught of more my dimm'd gaze might descry.
So is it when we leave the world of dreams;
So, so, in the issues of mankind, we see
That Life is but a radiance which gleams
With beauty from a far-off Majesty;
That, with a power which is not what it seems,
Death changes Life into Eternity.

March 11th, 1883

Happiness: An Ode.

----◇----

I.

Oft have I heard it said in pitying tones
Or words of wild dismay,
That ~~m~~Man's short day
Is only a long night,
Unlit by fickle Pleasure's glimmering light,
Unbroken save by Sorrow's broken moans –
For Man, 'tis said is but the slave of Care,
That hard task-master, who doth ne'er
Lift from his weary back the heavy load;
While close beside him stands
Grim-eyed Despair,
And Jealousy whose eyes for ever keep
A secret watch, e'en while they seem to sleep;
And Trouble with her hundred hands
That never rest;
And thousand ills and miseries beside,
And gaunt Disease that gnaws the breast;
All these from far and wide
Toss Man from one to other like a ball,

Happiness : An Ode.

I.

Oft have I heard it said in pitying tones
Or words of wild dismay,
That Man's short day
Is only a long night,
Unlit by fickle Pleasure's glimmering light,
Unbroken save by Sorrow's broken moans –
For Man, 'tis said, is but the slave of Care,
That hard task-master, who doth ne'er
Lift from his weary back the heavy load;
While close beside him stands
Grim-eyed Despair,
And Jealousy whose eyes for ever keep
A secret watch, e'en while they seem to sleep;
And Trouble with her hundred hands
That never rest;
And thousand ills and miseries beside,
And gaunt Disease that gnaws the breast:
All these from far and wide
Toss Man from one to other like a ball,

As children at a game,
And, at the last, grown weary of their play,
They let him fall
To be caught up by Death – ever the same
The fate for each man, be he what he may,
Ever the same goal for each man to find:
But Hope or Joy's bright beam
Ne'er throws a gleam
To light his darksome house of mortal clay;
And at the end when he has pass'd away,
To those he leaves behind
His life, his self is but a filmy dream
Which soon is lost amid Time's whirling stream.

II.

It cannot be. Go thou and wander forth
Amid the gladness of the fields around,
Where every voice and sound
But tells the growing blessedness
And heartfelt happiness
Of every creature; when the fragrant morn,
To greet the late-come Spring, is newly born,
And lies in deep content, and feels the bliss

As children at a game,
And, at the last, grown weary of their play,
They let him fall
To be caught up by Death – ever the same
The fate for each man, be he what he may,
Ever the same goal for each man to find:
But Hope or Joy's bright beam
Ne'er throws a gleam
To light his darksome house of mortal clay;
And at the end when he has pass'd away,
To those he leaves behind
His life, his self is but a filmy dream
Which soon is lost amid Time's whirling stream.

II.

It cannot be. Go thou and wander forth
Amid the gladness of the fields around,
Where every voice and sound
But tells the growing blessedness
And heartfelt happiness
Of every creature; when the fragrant morn,
To greet the late-come Spring, is newly born,
And lies in deep content, and feels the bliss

Of the sun's early kiss,
As up he rises in the cloudless blue
To run his race anew
Thro' the bright heaven; and the whole earth seems
To blossom into joy amid his sportive beams: -
Or when, amid the calm of evening bells
Whose far-off cadence sinks and swells
On the soft-heaving bosom of the breeze,
Far out beyond the sunlight dying on the leas
The Sabbath eve, enveiled in still repose,
Doth find its holy close;
And wrapt around in beauty all the world doth lie,
The earnest of a blest eternity: –
Or, when the night is fair,
When up above on high
Deep-set in azure 'mid the quiet air
The stars in silence lie,
And watch the moon, their mistress-Queen,
Where she is seen
Unbraiding in the sky
The silvery tresses of her silken hair –
Then, when no sound is heard
From beast or bird,

Of the sun's early kiss,
As up he rises in the cloudless blue
To run his race anew
Thro' the bright heaven; and the whole earth seems
To blossom into joy amid his sportive beams:—
Or when, amid the calm of evening bells
Whose far-off cadence sinks and swells
On the soft-heaving bosom of the breeze,
Far out beyond the sunlight dying on the leas
The Sabbath eve, enwaled in still repose,
Doth fold its holy close;
And wapt around in beauty all the world doth lie,
The earnest of a blest eternity:—
Or, when the night is fair,
When up above on high
Deep-set in azure 'mid the quiet air
The stars in silence lie,
And watch the moon, their mistress-queen,
Where she is seen
Unbraiding in the sky
The silvery tresses of her silken hair—
Then, when no sound is heard
From beast or bird,

Save when, within his shady dell,
The bird of angels, tawny Philomel,
That rebel 'gainst the peaceful clam of night,
Tunes his melodious numbers, soft and strong,
And hides the liquid beauties of his song
Amid the groove's soft stillness and the forest's cool delight –
Then, as thou wanderest on in meditation
And deep'ning exultation,
Ask of thy secret heart, Can this be true
That Man upon this earth
Has but an endless birth
Of sorrow, trouble, bitterness and rue?
Ask this, and thou wilt hear
Straightway in accents clear
The ready answer given: 'Tis not true.

III.

To me it seems that every bird and beast,
Yea, and each insect and each flower beside,
Is Man's own fellow creature; a close tie
To him doth bind the greatest and the least
Alike in perfect unity;
And for each living thing are stars to guide

Save when, within his shady dell,
The bird of angels, tawny Philomel,
That rebel 'gainst the peaceful calm of night,
Tunes his melodious numbers, soft and strong,
And hides the liquid beauties of his song
Amid the grove's soft stillness and the forest's cool delight—
Then, as thou wanderest on in meditation
And deep'ning exultation,
Ask of thy secret heart, Can this be true
That Man upon this earth
Has but an endless birth
Of sorrow, trouble, bitterness and rue?
Ask this, and thou wilt hear
Straightway in accents clear
The ready answer given: 'Tis not true.

III.

To me it seems that every bird and beast,
Yea, and each insect and each flower beside,
Is Man's own fellow creature; a close tie
To him doth bind the greatest and the least
Alike in perfect unity;
And for each living thing are stars to guide

His feet in paths of joy which grief would have denied.

Is it not joy that prompts the tender lambs
To frisk around their well-contented dams
Throughout the flowery meads, where each doth lie
And show the gladsome softness of her eye?
Is there no joy within the Skylark's breast,
As carolling he soars on eager wings
    Leaving his nest upon the plain,
While the sun sheds a halo o'er his strain;
When, hidden in a glory round about,
He calls our souls to Heaven, as he sings
A glorious Hallelujah, and pours out
    His thanks for very life?
Do not the bees rejoice? Do not the gnats
Feel a quick happiness, what time they weave
Their mazy dance on a cool Summer's eve,
    Each like an airy fay?
Ah, yes! and e'en each tree and plant and flower
Doth joy to drink the sunshine and the May,
And feels an inward sense of each bright hour
Until at length it fade and die away –
When Nature, then, rejoices, why not Man
Who is of all creation lord and chief?

His feet in paths of joy which grief would have denied.
Is it not joy that prompts the tender lambs
To frisk around their well-contented dams
Throughout the flowery meads, where Each doth lie
And show the gladsome softness of her eye?
Is there no joy within the Skylark's breast,
As carolling he soars on eager wings
Leaving his nest upon the plain,
While the sun sheds a halo o'er his strain;
When, hidden in a glory round about,
He calls our souls to Heaven, as he sings
A glorious Hallelujah, and pours out
His thanks for very life?
Do not the bees rejoice? Do not the gnats
Feel a quick happiness, what time they weave
Their mazy dance on a cool Summer's eve,
Each like an airy fay?
Ah, yes! and e'en each tree and plant and flower
Doth joy to drink the sunshine and the May,
And feels an inward sense of each bright hour
Until at length it fade and die away -
When Nature, then, rejoices, why not Man
Who is of all creation lord and chief?

These creatures only live the tiny span
Of one short hour, we but of one short day:
They, in a life so brief,
Can taste the purest fountain-head of joy;
And surely we, employing reason's ray,
Can forge a chain of gold without alloy,
A chain of happiness and peace and love,
To climb to gladder realms and ~~happ~~ brighter homes above.

IV.

Each man can make or mar his own delight.
For 'tis an inward, not an outward, thing;
And each on the swift wing
Of faith, and trust, and love may urge his flight
To spirit-homes where all is fair and bright,
To thoughts and hopes with which the heart-chords ring
In joyous sympathy:
If to the sun-rise of Eternity
A man will set his steadfast face, unmoved
By worldly turmoils, with a spirit proved
By a true earnestness,
Then will he know a happiness
Unspeakable, ~~ends~~ unending, undefined –

These creatures only live the tiny span
Of one short hour, we but of one short day:
They, in a life so brief,
Can taste the purest fountain-head of joy;
And surely we, employing reason's ray,
Can forge a chain of gold without alloy,
A chain of happiness and peace and love,
To climb to gladder realms and ~~happ~~ brighter homes above.

IV.

Each man can make or mar his own delight.
For 'tis an inward, not an outward, thing;
And each on the swift wing
Of faith, and trust, and love may urge his flight
To spirit-homes where all is fair and bright,
To thoughts and hopes with which the heart-chords ring
In joyous sympathy:
If to the sun-rise of Eternity
A man will set his steadfast face, unmoved
By worldly turmoils, with a spirit proved
By a true earnestness,
Then will he know a happiness
Unspeakable, ~~endless~~ unending, undefined—

Though at the first, perchance, upon his mind
That sun may shed but dimly a few rays,
Which strike athwart a mass of gloomy clouds
In unexpressive glory,
Telling, by their own beauty, the glad story
Of that pure ~~wh~~ radiance from which they rise; -
Yet, if he persevere,
Untouch'd by doubt or fear,
At length those clouds will scatter from the skies,
And a full glow of brightness meet his gaze,
An endless union of fairest rays
That ever smote upon Creation's eyes –
And in his soul, a joy that cannot cease,
And everlasting peace!
Yes, while all Nature in her heart is glad,
And while no thing is[12] all the world is sad,
From low to high;
While the birds sing a joyous strain;
While the sun shines, and summer beauties smile
Amid the sky;
And while all creatures in the glad refrain
Join, in the hymn of thankfulness for life,
For life that throbs with joy in every breast –

12 A mistake for "in."

Though at the first, perchance, upon his mind
That sun may shed but dimly a few rays,
Which strike athwart a mass of gloomy clouds
In unexpressive glory,
Telling, by their own beauty, the glad story
Of that pure radiance ~~of~~ from which they rise,—
Yet, if he persevere,
Untouch'd by doubt or fear,
At length those clouds will scatter from the skies,
And a full glow of brightness meet his gaze,
An endless union of fairest rays
That ever smote upon Creation's eyes—
And in his soul, a joy that cannot cease,
An everlasting peace!
Yea, while all Nature in her heart is glad,
And while no thing is all the world is sad,
From low to high;
While the birds sing a joyous strain;
While the sun shines, and summer beauties smile
Amid the sky;
And while all creatures in the glad refrain
Join, in the hymn of thankfulness for life,
For life that throbs with joy in every breast—

Still may Man know a bliss that ne’er will die,

Still may his soul thrill with eternal rest.

----◇----

March, 1883.

Still may Man know a bliss that ne'er will die,
Still may his soul thrill with eternal rest.

March, 1883.

-Sonnet-

A Fancy.

----◇----

Long years agone, when the fair summer-night
Had in the gloaming kiss'd the day to die,
When half forgotten by the drowsy sky
Was the late brightness of the sun's delight –
Then oft I used to think those stars so bright
Were angels' eyes, that watch men's deeds on high,
And homeward, when the new day breaks, they fly,
Bearing their tidings to the Heavenly Might.
'Twas but a childlike fancy; yet whene'er
E'en now I gaze upon those stars, meseems
That for a sign have they been station'd there,
A token aye down-carried in their beams
That still our weal and woe are 'neath His care,
And still He watcheth e'en our thoughts and dreams.

----◇----

March 30, 1883.

- Sonnet -

A Fancy.

Long years agone, when the fair summer-night
Had in the gloaming kiss'd the day to die,
When half forgotten by the drowsy sky
Was the late brightness of the sun's delight —
When oft I used to think those stars so bright
Were angels' eyes, that watch men's deeds on high,
And homeward, when the new day breaks, they fly,
Bearing their tidings to the Heavenly Might.
'Twas but a childlike fancy; yet whene'er
E'en now I gaze upon those stars, meseems
That for a sign have they been station'd there,
A token aye down-carried in their beams
That still our weal and woe are 'neath His care,
And still He watcheth e'en our thoughts and dreams.

March 3

Tracery.

----◇----

I.

He sat upon a hill alone:
Down fell the westering sun;
The world seem'd dying in the night; —
The day was done.

II.

Calm was the scene; none near him there
To trouble his repose;
And the white cirri ~~illeg.~~ caught the sun
With flush of rose.

III.

Hush'd was the world; — His thoughts were far,
While on the dusk gray sand
He traced the name of her he loved
With pensive hand.

Tracery.

I.

He sat upon a hill alone:
Down fell the westering sun;
The world seem'd dying in the night;—
The day was done.

II.

Calm was the scene; none near him there
To trouble his repose;
And the white cirri ~~that~~ caught the sun
With flush of rose.

III.

Hush'd was the world;— His thoughts were far,
While on the dusk gray sand
He traced the name of her he loved
With pensive hand.

IV.

‘Twas as a dream; unconsciously
He wrote again that name,
And, as he wrote, the sun fell ~~down~~ dead
And darkness came.

V.

Ere he arose, had night embalm’d
That name in twilight rest;
But still it kept a safer home
Within his breast.

----◇----

March 31, 1883.

II.

'Twas as a dream; unconsciously
He wrote again that name,
And, as he wrote, the Sun fell ~~down~~ dead
And darkness came.

V.

Ere he arose, had night embalm'd
That name in twilight rest;
But still it kept as safer home
Within his breast.

March 31, 18

My Sailor-boy: A Ballad.

----◇----

I had a son as fair as Day –
I loved him tenderly,
And aye of all the wide wide world
He was most dear to me;
Twelve summers only had he seen –
A bonnie lad I trow:
But he would be a sailor-boy
To sail the waves; and now –
And now – above him, fresh and free,
Drearily, wearily
Washes the deep deep sea.

Ah! shall I e'er forget the morn
When first he left his home,
In the tall ship to foreign lands
The watery waste to roam? –
The sun shone bright on his farewell;
The morn was blythe and fair;
The waves rolled broad and blue; but now
I hate their sight; for there –
For there – above him, fresh and free,
Drearily, wearily
Washes the deep deep sea.

My Sailor boy: A Ballad.

I had a son as fair as Day –
I loved him tenderly,
And aye of all the wide wide world
He was most dear to me;
Twelve summers only had he seen –
A bonnie lad I trow:
But he would be a sailor-boy
To sail the waves; and now –
And now – above him, fresh and free,
Drearily, wearily
Hashes the deep deep sea.

Ah! shall I e'er forget the morn
When first he left his home,
In the tall ship to foreign lands
The watery waste to roam? –
The sun shone bright on his farewell;
The morn was blythe and fair;
The waves rolled broad and blue; but now
I hate their sight; for there –
For there – above him, fresh and free,
Drearily, wearily
Hashes the deep deep sea.

He sailed by many a stranger shore
For many a long long day,
And many a wondrous sight he saw,
Crossing the watery way;
At last he wrote, “We’re coming home!”
The shadows left my brow –
But fatal storms caught up the ship,
And dashed her down; and now –
And now – above him, fresh and free,
Drearily, wearily
Washes the deep deep sea.

Ah me! my sailor-boy is gone,
And will come home no more;
Alake! I know not what to do;
My heart is sick and sore.
I try to think it right and good,
To cease from fear and fret –
I try to hope, to think it well,
All for the best – But yet –
But yet – above him, fresh and free,
Drearily, wearily
Washes the deep deep sea.

Ap. 9, 1883.

He sailed by many a stranger shore
For many a long long day,
And many a wondrous sight he saw,
Crossing the watery way;
At last he wrote, "We're coming home!"
The shadows left my brow –
But fatal storms caught up the ship,
And dashed her down; and now –
And now – above him, fresh and free,
Drearily, wearily
Washes the deep deep sea.

Ah me! my sailor-boy is gone,
And will come home no more;
Alake! I know not what to do;
My heart is sick and sore.
I try to think it right and good,
To cease from fear and fret –
I try to hope, to think it well,
All for the best – But yet –
But yet – above him, fresh and free,
Drearily, wearily
Washes the deep deep sea.

Ap. 9

Pax Vobiscum.[13]

----◇----

I saw an angel like a glory glide
Down from the heavens amid the starry night;
Within his arms he bore a little child,
Robed dazzlingly in light;
White-winge'd the child, bosom'd in majesty,
His head with roses crown'd, a perfume-chain –
"Peace cometh," sang the nightingale; the breeze
Caught up the glad refrain.
He came: he stay'd a little while on earth;
Alas! he found no home – the starry night
Took him once more, and from this world of strife
He fled to endless light:
Yet even now sometimes he comes to us,
To dwell within our hearts and chase dull pain;
Then "Peace be with you!" sings the nightingale,
And lingers o'er his strain.

April 26, 1883.

13 "Peace be with you," used in the Catholic mass.

Pax Vobiscum.

I saw an angel like a glory glide
Down from the heavens amid the starry night;
Within his arms he bore a little child,
Robed dazzlingly in light;
White-winged the child, bosom'd in majesty,
His head with roses crown'd, a perfume-chain—
"Peace cometh," sang the nightingale; the breeze
Caught up the glad refrain.
He came: he stay'd a little while on earth;
Alas! he found no home—the starry night
Took him once more, and from this world of strife
He fled to endless light:
Yet even now sometimes he comes to us,
To dwell within our hearts and chase dull pain;
Then "Peace be with you!" sings the nightingale,
And lingers o'er his strain.

April 26, 1883.

Daniel[14]

What city that, which erst in Orient lands,
Embosomed ‘mid a wilderness of sands,
Took the first glory of the rising day?
A city round whose walls thick pine-groves lay,
Like islands in a golden waste of wave,
And tossed their darksome heads, the sunbeams’ grave.
A city huge, with towers and temples crowned,
While smiling domes and minarets around,
Uncounted as the laughter of the sea,
Caught up the darling rays in playful glee,
And flung them back in myriad points of light;
There too the famous gardens flower-bedight,
Raised tier on tier in sweeps of grassy sward,
A gem suspended by a viewless cord.
Whose power and pride, whose majesty and slate?
What city that? Know’st not? ‘Tis Babylon the Great!

It was the time when Winter’s icy hand
Loosened its[15] withered grasp on sea and land,
And with red rosy foot fair Spring passed by
Upborne by drowsy Zephyr’s whispered sigh
On wings of gossamer all pearled with dew,

14 See the Book of Daniel in the Bible.

15 The first words in this and the next line are re-written above the originals, ink-spoiled.

Daniel.

What city that, which erst in Orient lands,
Embosomed 'mid a wilderness of sands,
Took the first glory of the rising day?
A city round whose walls thick pine-groves lay,
Like islands in a golden waste of wave,
And tossed their dankisome heads, the sunbeams' grave.
A city huge, with towers and temples crowned,
While smiling domes and minarets around,
Uncounted as the laughter of the sea,
Caught up the darting rays in playful glee,
And flung them back in myriad points of light;
There too the famous gardens, flower-bedight,
Raised tier on tier in sweeps of grassy sward,
A gem suspended by a viewless cord.
Whose power and pride, whose majesty and state?
What city that? Knowst not? 'Tis Babylon the Great!

It was the time when Winter's icy hand
Loosened its withered grasp on sea and land,
And with red. Rosy foot fair Spring passed by
Upborne by drowsy Zephyr's whispered sigh
On wings of gossamer all pearled with dew,

Their rainbow colours shot with changeful hue:
And as through empyrean air she sped,
A coronal of blossoms on her head,
There rippled from her lips a smile of mirth;
An answ'ring smile awoke the face of Earth,
And soon the flowers peeped out 'mid pencilled leaves,
Blushing with coy delight from mossy eaves;
The birds loud carolled in the wood's fresh green:
All Nature was rejoiced to meet her queen.
The sun was rushing through a golden haze;
The city-walls were spangled with his rays;
His beams were printing a fresh morning-kiss
On bright Aurora's cheeks that blushed with bliss,
And on the groves whose branches, newly-blest,
Granted to weary limbs some shady rest.
An open casement framed the youthful face
Of Daniel, child of Judah; gentle grace
Seemed breathed into his features by the buds
That wav~~ing~~ed their pouting beauty in sweet floods
Of perfume round the lattice; kneeling there,
His soul was raised to Heaven in fervent prayer;
His eyes were fixed upon Euphrates' stream,
Winding its roaming silver where each beam

Their rainbow colours shot with changeful hue:
And as through Empyrean air she sped,
A coronal of blossoms on her head,
There rippled from her lips a smile of mirth;
An answ'ring smile awoke the face of Earth,
And soon the flowers peeped out 'mid pencilled leaves,
Blushing with coy delight from mossy caves;
The birds loud carolled in the wood's fresh green:
All Nature was rejoiced to meet her queen.
The Sun was rushing through a golden haze;
The city-walls were spangled with his rays;
His beams were printing a fresh morning-kiss
On bright Aurora's cheeks that blushed with bliss,
And on the groves whose branches, mirthy-blest,
Granted to weary limbs some shady rest.
An open casement framed the youthful face
Of Daniel, child of Judah; gentle grace
Seemed breathed into his features by the buds
That wavèd their pouting beauty in sweet floods
Of perfume round the lattice; Kneeling there,
His soul was raised to Heaven in fervent prayer;
His eyes were fixed upon Euphrates' stream,
Winding its roaming silver where each beam

In mazy dance seemed bent on gladdest play;
Long gazed he where his native city lay,
In fading space far distant from his eyes,
And with soothed spirit was about to rise,
When lo! a murmured whisper from the street –
A pause – a shout – a rush of many feet;
And straightway entered in a noisy rout
Who, taking Daniel, led him forth without,
And brought him to the King: then all the crowd
Thrice in deep veneration lowly bowed,
And thus: “O mighty King, thy high commands
This Daniel disobeying, lifts his hands
In prayer unto his God three times a day;
And now must he be cast without delay
Into the den of lions for this cause,
According to the Medes’ and Persians’ laws
Which alter not.”
They ended: but the King
Was wrathful with himself; Contrition’s wing
Brooded upon him, and pale-featured Pain
Watched at his breast; all day he sought in vain
How to deliver Daniel, but, held fast
In bonds he could not break, gave word at last.

In mazy dance seemed bent on gladdest play;
Long gazed he where his native city lay,
In fading space far distant from his eyes,
And with soothed spirit was about to rise,
When lo! a murmured whisper from the street—
A pause—a shout—a rush of many feet;
And straightway entered in a noisy rout
Who, taking Daniel, led him forth without,
And brought him to the King: then all the crowd
Thrice in deep veneration lowly bowed,
And thus: "O mighty King, thy high commands
This Daniel disobeying, lifts his hands
In prayer unto his God three times a day;
And now must he be cast without delay
Into the den of lions for this cause,
According to the Medes' and Persians' laws
Which alter not."
They ended: but the King
Was wrathful with himself; Contrition's wing
Brooded upon him, and pale-featured Pain
Watched at his breast; all day he sought in vain
How to deliver Daniel, but, held fast
In bonds he could not break, gave word at last.

Now was bright Phoebus with his good-night flush
Throwing a hasty farewell, and a blush
Sat crimson on his face as though of shame;
For through the palace-gardens Daniel came,
Led by an eager throng. – A lovely spot,
With many a sunny glade and shady grot,
And bed of lushest flowers and mossy nook,
And the bright rambles of a laughing brook;
Trees that would soon sun-painted fruits display
Of bloom that ne'er a Zeuxis could portray.
At length the band had reached a sombre copse
Which hurled aloft its dark embattled tops,
Glinted between by some fast-faltering rays;
Here were black pines and some all lichen-grays,
And some in drapery of ivy quaint,
Through which the dying beams were ebbing faint.
Here in the voiceless gloom a huge stone lay,
That quickly by prone strength was rolled away,
And showed beneath a cave; vast was its size –
Escarpèd rocks and pointed crags, shear-wise
Down hanging, where the sun no light could give,
Where flutt'ring day nigh vainly strove to ~~lif~~ live;
And dimmest dungeons stretching many a span

Now was bright Phoebus with his good-night flush
Throwing a hasty farewell, and a blush
Sat crimson on his face as though of shame;
For through the palace-gardens Daniel came,
Led by an eager throng. — A lovely spot,
With many a sunny glade and shady grot,
And bed of lushest flowers and mossy nook,
And the bright rambles of a laughing brook;
Trees that would soon Sun-painted fruits display
Of bloom that ne'er a Zeuxis could portray.
At length the band had reached a sombre copse
Which hurled aloft its dark embattled tops,
Glinted between by some fast-faltering rays;
Here were black pines and some all lichen-grays,
And some in drapery of ivy quaint,
Through which the dying beams were ebbing faint.
Here in the voiceless gloom a huge stone lay,
That quickly by prone strength was rolled away,
And showed beneath a cave; vast was its size —
Escarped rocks and pointed crags, spear-wise
Down hanging, where the sun no light could give,
Where fluttering day might vainly strove to live,
And dimmest dungeons stretching many a span

Through depths untrodden by the foot of man,
Blacker than Tartarus; and, fearful sight!
There stood the lions ~~and with~~ in their angry might;
With muttered death amid their jaws; while fire
Gleamed from their eyes, as oft to tawny ire
They lashed their horrent sides, and tossed around
Their brinded manes, all shaggy o'er the ground –
Huge in their hugeness, panting forth loud roars,
As when vast Ætna mumbled through her shores,
Or when Charybdis mid the billows groaned;
So roared they, till the rocks responsive moaned
And muttered thunders on the trembling air;
As if in ruffled wrath that aught should dare
Rashly their sleeping majesty to wake.
Herein was Daniel thrust; the king thus spake:
"Now may the God thou servest be thy shield!" –
Then was the stone rolled back and signet sealed.

At length Night's jetty robe concealed the skies.
Sparkling with million gems and starry eyes,
And one pale opal, in a crystal glow,
Down looking on the silent world below.
The King had reached his palace and was now

Through depths untrodden by the foot of man,
Blacker than Tartarus; and, fearful sight!
There stood the lions in their angry might;
With muttered death amid their jaws; while fire
Gleamed from their eyes, as oft to tawny ire
They lashed their horrent sides, and tossed around
Their brindled manes, all shaggy o'er the ground—
Huge in their hugeness, panting forth loud roars,
As when vast Ætna rumbled through her shores,
Or when Charybdis mid the billows groaned;
So roared they, till the rocks responsive moaned
And muttered thunders on the trembling air;
As if in ruffled wrath that aught should dare
Rashly their sleeping majesty to wake.
Herein was Daniel thrust; the King thus spake:
"Now may the God thou servest be thy shield!"—
Then was the stone rolled back and signet-sealed.

At length Night's jetty robe concealed the skies.
Sparkling with million gems and starry eyes,
And one pale opal, in a crystal glow,
Down looking on the silent world below.
The King had reached his palace and was now

Stretched on his weary couch with wrinkled brow;
No music lulled him with its soothing wings;
No murmured melody of mild harp-strings
Greeted his ear; no gentle sleep bedewed
His restless limbs; but in his heart was feud
‘Twixt Right and Wrong, and by his side Remorse
Stood, hydra-headed with resistless force.
He shrank at every shade, at every sound,
With secret shudder; while without all round
The mellow stars inlaced the cloud-rift sky
With silver lightenings, and appeared to vie
In killing darkness; while the moon’s clear light
Threw down its argent splendours on the night
With quiv’ring fingers. But when first the morn
Expanded into life, and came upbore
On eastern cloudlets, rose the King in haste
And hurried to the den; long time he paced
Heart-sick around, ere voice he found to speak,
While beaded brine went coursing down his cheek:
“Is thy God able from the lions’ jaws,
O Daniel, to preserve thee?” – A short pause,
And the King’s words seemed loud a while, until
E’en Silence grew herself more silent still.

Stretched on his weary couch with wrinkled brow;
No music lulled him with its soothing wings;
No murmured melody of mild harp-strings
Greeted his ear; no gentle sleep bedewed
His restless limbs; but in his heart was feud
'Twixt Right and Wrong, and by his side Remorse
Stood, hydra-headed with resistless force.
He shrank at every shade, at every sound,
With secret shudder; while without all round
The mellow stars inlaced the cloud-rift sky
With silver lightnings, and appeared to vie
In killing darkness; while the moon's clear light
Threw down its argent splendours on the night
With quiv'ring fingers. But when first the morn
Expanded into life, and came upborne
On eastern cloudlets, rose the King in haste
And hurried to the den; long time he paced
Heart-sick around, ere voice he found to speak,
While beaded brine went coursing down his cheek:
"Is thy God able from the lions' jaws,
O Daniel, to preserve thee?" A short pause,
And the King's words seemed loud a while, until
E'en Silence grew herself more silent still.

Then forth the lions roared and pierced the poles,
Like rumbling rage of rugged thunder-rolls.
The King fell back a pace, when hark! what voice,
Calm thrilling upward, makes his heart rejoice
And with unhoped-for hope grow new once more?
‘Tis Daniel, steadfast, scathless as before,
Undaunted. Disbelief with veiled head
Spread her black pinions wondering, and fled.
And then, for Truth must live and falsehood die,
Straight from Death’s terrors Daniel safe could fly;
But his accusers, women, children, men,
Were cast amid the horror of the den,
Where soon the lions wrought their rightful doom
Or ever came they to the lower gloom.
So Daniel prospered in this reign, his life
Lit up by constant faith – Faith lifke the strife
Of a bright sunbeam which as, o’er the sky
Shooting, it strikes the swart clouds, will not die,
But, struggling onward, bears a tale of mirth
In unexpressive glory to the earth.
Such was the faith of Daniel: so to sin
He died in life, and living died to win
A deathless glory and immortal crown.

Then forth the lions roared and pierced the poles,
Like rumbling rage of rugged thunder-rolls.
The King fell back a pace, when hark! what voice,
Calm thrilling upward, makes his heart rejoice
And with unhoped-for hope grow new once more?
'Tis Daniel, steadfast, scathless as before,
Undaunted. Disbelief with veiled head
Spread her black pinions wondering, and fled.
And then, for Truth must live and Falsehood die,
Straight from Death's terrors Daniel safe could fly;
But his accusers, women, children, men,
Were cast amid the horror of the den,
Where soon the lions wrought their rightful doom
Or ever came they to the lower gloom.
So Daniel prospered in this reign, his life
Lit up by constant faith - Faith like the strife
Of a bright sunbeam which as, o'er the sky
Shooting, it strikes the swart clouds, will not die,
But, struggling onward, bears a tale of mirth
In unexpressive glory to the earth.
Such was the faith of Daniel: so to sin
He died in life, and living died to win
A deathless glory and immortal crown.

No more the city stands: nought but the frown
Of mighty ruins greets the traveller's gaze –
Nought but a fleeting vision of old days.
Its pomp has passed. Yet still each season goes
As erst it did; still bright Euphrates flows,
Sun-blest, and, murmuring to distant lands,
Rolls on his broad blue wave; still the wide sands
Watch with their dull dead stare the skies above –
And still the world is young in hope and love.

Oct. 1882.

(Prox. Acc. For the Milton Prize at S. Paul's School, 1883)[16]

16 "Proxime Accessit" = runner-up for an academic prize. The Milton Prize went to H. G. Snowden, for *his* "Daniel" (*The Pauline*, II:7 [October 1883], 155). Snowden went on to Lincoln College, Oxford, where he became president of the Oxford Union (Trinity Term) and was active in debate and rowing (*The Oxford Magazine*, May 2, 1888, p. 320). The subject for the competition had been set by December 1882 (*The Pauline*, 3:1 [December 1882], 62).

No more the city stands: nought but the frown
Of mighty ruins greets the traveller's gaze -
Nought but a fleeting vision of old days.
Its pomp has passed. Yet still each season goes
As erst it did; still bright Euphrates flows,
Sun-blest, and, murmuring to distant lands,
Rolls on his broad blue wave; still the wide sands
Watch with their dull dead stare the skies above -
And still the world is young in hope and love.

Oct. 1882.

Prox. Acc. for the Milton Prize at S. Paul's School, 1883)

Winter Winds

I

Hush! – She is dying.
Slowly a blossom of life is fading away:
Calmly – for scarce can we catch the long lingering sighing
Of those pure marble lips so lovingly trying
E'en with their latest breath to cheerfully say
'Farewell' –
Farewell! And the winter winds are moaning, and the flowers falling or gone.

II

Hush! – She is dead.
'Mourn not the eye ever closed,' says Faith, 'or the cheek
Whence the last soul of the roses for ever has fled:
Mourn not the fresh young life that has homeward sped.'
Yet Sorrow says 'Mourn,' and human nature weak
'She is dead' –
She is dead! And the winter winds are moaning, and the flowers falling or gone.

Dec. 21st, 1883

Winter Winds

I

Hush! – She is dying.
Slowly a blossom of life is fading away:
Calmly – for scarce can we catch the long lingering sighing
Of those pure marble lips so lovingly trying
E'en with their latest breath to cheerfully say
'Farewell' –
Farewell! And the winter winds are moaning, and the flowers falling

II

Hush! – She is dead.
'Mourn not the eye ever closed', says Faith, 'or the cheek
Whence the last soul of the roses for ever has fled:
Mourn not the fresh young life that has homeward sped'.
Yet Sorrow says 'Mourn', and human nature weak
'She is dead' –
Dead! And the winter winds are moaning, and the flowers falling or g

Dec. 21st, 188

Ἐνη καὶ Νέα [17]

(Farewell to S. Paul's School: on the removal of the School to Hammersmith).

1

Farewell, a long farewell! Four hundred years
O'er thee, Saint Paul's, have flowed in changeful stream,
And now thy latest smile is met with tears,
For we must leave thee; we who ne'er could deem
That this would come: now like a fading dream
Thou fall'st away on Time's eternal breast,
Fast vanishing as sinks the sun's last beam
In ruined splendor to his restless rest,
Sinks – yes, but not for ever – in the crimson west.

2

Alas! no more thy precincts shall resound
With merry voice ~~wit~~ and feet that never tire;
No more shalt thou for coming time be found
The home of heroes and the one call higher
To nobler things: for Learning's sacred fire,
As the relentless ages still roll on,
Shall in thy gray and weathered walls expire;
On her own altar here, and here anon
Silence shall sit alone and weep, – and we be gone.

17 "The Old and The New Day." In the school's removing itself from the City to Kensington, the editor of *The Pauline* (possibly Alexander himself) noted, "the incubus of noise, and fog, and cramped space, has been lifted from our shoulders" (*The Pauline*, II:12 (October 1884), [263]. The stanza numbers for this poem are encircled.

Ἐν καὶ Νέα

(Farewell to S. Paul's School: on the removal of the School to Hammersmith).

---

①

Farewell, a long farewell! Four hundred years
O'er thee, Saint Paul's, have flowed in changeful stream,
And now thy latest smile is met with tears,
For we must leave thee; we who ne'er could deem
That this would come: now like a fading dream
Thou fall'st away on Time's eternal breast,
Fast vanishing as sinks the sun's last beam
In ruined splendour to his restless rest,
Sinks- ayes, but not for ever- in the crimson west.

②

Alas! no more thy precincts shall resound
With merry voice ~~out~~ and feet that never tire;
No more shalt thou for coming time be found
The home of heroes and the one call higher
To nobler things: for Learning's sacred fire,
As the relentless ages still roll on,
Shall in thy gray and weathered walls expire
On her own altar here, and here anon
Silence shall sit alone and weep, — and we be gone.

3

Soon, ah! too soon the summer night shall gaze
For the last time on thee, while thou art ours:
Soon the last splendour of the summer days
Shall cast a halo round thy dying hours; –
For thou wilt die: methinks thou know'st the powers
Of life and death; methinks a spirit o'erhead
Of thee and thine broods like a scent of flowers,
Whispering "Farewell, farewell!", in murmurous dread
"Farewell!" – Hark! Hear ye? 'Tis the voices of the dead.

4

The voices of the dead! First his who gave
This school its primal breath of life and light,
Pure-hearted Colet: Learning left her grave
At his long earnest call, and rose to might
Like a lone star, the only son of night,
Which rides on the wings of morn and bids the shroud
Of darkness fall, so glowed his beacon bright
Amid the gloom of ages dark and proud:
His very life a poem, a rainbow on the cloud.

③

Soon, ah! too soon the summer night shall gaze
For the last time on thee, while thou art ours:
Soon the last splendours of the summer days
Shall cast a halo round thy dying hours;—
For thou wilt die: methinks thou know'st the powers
Of life and death; methinks a spirit o'erhead
Of thee and thine broods like a scent of flowers,
Whisp'ring "Farewell, farewell!", in murmurous dread
"Farewell!"— Hark! Hear ye? 'Tis the voices of the dead.

④

The voices of the dead! First his who gave
This school its primal breath of life and light,
Pure-hearted Colet: Learning left her grave
At this long earnest call, and rose to might.
Like a lone star, the only son of night,
Which rides on the wings of morn and bids the shroud
Of darkness fall, so glowed his beacon bright
Amid the gloom of ages dark and proud:
His very life a poem, a rainbow on the cloud.

5

Then Milton: he whose trumpet-notes declare
Deep truths of Heaven and Hell – infinite pain,
Infinite love and infinite despair:
He sang of Paradise, by carnal stain
Lost, yet thro' Love Divine won back again.
'Twas here, the rose of English poesy,
He grew, and wed his soul to loftiest strain;
'Twas here that deeply, as a deep calm sea,
He felt the bright first dawn of immortality.

6

Great Marlborough next, a Briton staunch and true,
Swift to obey, unerring to command:
Honour to him! Our school was first that knew
That lightning of his soul which smote the land
Of lilied France when her famed warrior-band
Beneath him bowed their heads to rise no more,
On Blenheim's glorious field, while in his hand,
Amid the fiery fight, the cannon's roar
Full redly flashed and fell the thunderbolt of war.

(5)

Then Milton: he whose trumpet-notes declare
Deep truths of Heaven and Hell – infinite pain,
Infinite * love and infinite disdain:
He sang of Paradise, by carnal stain
Lost, yet thro' Love Divine won back again.
'Twas here, the rose of English poesy,
He grew, and wed his soul to loftiest strain;
'Twas here that deeply, as a deep calm sea,
He felt the bright first dawn of immortality.

(6)

Great Marlborough next, a Briton staunch and true,
Swift to obey, unerring to command:
Honour to him! Our school was first that knew
That lightning of his soul which smote the land
Of lilied France when her famed warrior-band
Beneath him bowed their heads to rise no more,
On Blenheim's glorious field, while in his hand,
Amid the fiery fight, the cannon's roar
Full redly flashed and fell the thunderbolt of war.

7

Then comes the patriot voice of one whose name
Is writ with sunbeams on the whole world wide –
André![18] What though he died a death of shame,
And fell by foeman's hand, by foeman's pride?
'Twas for his honour and his home he died,
Nor knew a fear where Duty called the brave:
Calm as the breath of purple eventide,
Soft as the Zephyr's kiss to dimpled wave
His death. An everlasting glory crowns his grave.

8

And many another voice of those no more;
Many whose names are pleasant to our ear
As the long wave which laughs upon the shore
Making its myriad change from smile to tear;
Many whose names are now no longer dear:
They mourn thee, old Saint Paul's, that wast their home,
They mourn thee: or, perchance, we seem to hear
A sadness 'mid the shadow of death's gloom,
A sorrow stealing from the silence of the tomb.

18 It appears to have been an article of faith that John André (1750-1780) had been a student at St. Paul's. André was hanged as a spy by the Americans during the Revolutionary War; asked if he had any last words, he replied, "Nothing, but to request that you will witness to the world that I die like a brave man" (See "Pauline News in 1768," *The Pauline*, IV:23 (December 1886), 493. Robert T. Gardiner noted in the next issue that "as for André, I regret to say that his name does not occur in any existing School list" ("Pauline Antiquities," *The Pauline*, V:24 (March 1887), 535. But St. Paul's nevertheless claimed him, as in Michael F. J. McDonnell, *A History of St. Paul's School* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1909), p. 350.

(7)

Then comes the patriot voice of one whose name
Is writ with sunbeams on the whole world wide –
André! What though he died a death of shame,
And fell by foeman's hand, by foeman's pride?
'Twas for his honour and his home he died,
Nor knew a fear where Duty called the brave:
Calm as the breath of purple eventide,
Soft as the Zephyr's kiss to dimpled wave
His death. An everlasting glory crowns his grave.

(8)

And many another voice of those no more,
Many whose names are pleasant to our ear
As the long wave which laughs upon the shore
Making its myriad change from smile to tear;
Many whose names are now no longer dear:
They mourn thee, old Saint Paul's, that wast their home,
They mourn thee: or, perchance, we seem to hear
A sadness 'mid the shadow of death's gloom,
A sorrow stealing from the silence of the tomb.

9

And we too mourn, Saint Paul's, for now we know
That we shall lose an old, old friend in thee;
Yet not thee only mourn we, ere we go:
Thee too, great monument of sanctity,
England's fair shrine of peace and piety,
Beneath whose shade hath Learnings taught her will,
While thou hast stood unmoved in majesty
And watched our sorrow-pang, our triumph-thrill, –
Grand as a solemn night of stars when all is still.

10

We know not our best friends before the night
When they are gone, and never can return;
The setting sun is loveliest to our sight
When thro' dark clouds his changing glories burn:
So now o'er thee, Saint Paul's, our spirits yearn,
To see thee at thy fairest, and to tell
This beauty is thy last; and now we learn
That while we loved, we loved not: – ~~no~~ so the knell
Peals over thee once more, a many-toned 'farewell!'

(9)

And we too mourn, Saint Paul's, for now we know
That we shall lose an old, old friend in thee;
Yet not thee only mourn we, ere we go:
Thee too, great monument of sanctity,
England's fair shrine of peace and piety,
Beneath whose shade hath learning taught her will,
While thou hast stood unmoved in majesty
And watched our sorrow-pang, our triumph-thrill,-
Grand as a solemn night of stars when all is still.

(10)

We know not our best friends before the night
When they are gone, and never can return;
The setting sun is loveliest to our sight
When thro' dark clouds his changing glories burn:
So now o'er thee, Saint Paul's, our spirits yearn,
To see thee at thy fairest, and to tell
This beauty is thy last; and now we learn
That while we loved, we loved not:- ~~no~~ so the Knell
Peals over thee once more, a many-toned 'farewell!'

11

But hark! the tones are changing. Ere the word
Has left the parted lips to close again
In sorrow, even now glad notes are heard
Which weave a whispered sweetness with our pain,
Then rise and swell, a full and joyous strain:
"A fairer home awaits you; – why this woe? –
A home where perfect peace can surely reign;
Where Earth a brighter song and smile can show;
A home of happiness: why mourn? – for ye must go."

12

Ah, yes; 'tis Nature's changeless, fixed decree,
New things must take the places of the Old:
So in the death of Winter do we see
The birth of Spring; and Summer hues unfold
To deepen into Autumn's ruddy gold.
On runs the tide of life – we cannot stay;
For we must change, while Change is uncontrolled:
Now majesty we see and now decay
For ever. And the lily blooms to fade away.

(11)

But hark! the tones are changing. Ere the word
Has left the parted lips to close again
In sorrow, even now glad notes are heard
Which weave a whispered sweetness with our pain,
Then rise and swell, a full and joyous strain:
"A fairer home awaits you;- why this woe?-
A home where perfect peace can surely reign;
Where Earth a brighter song and smile can show;
A home of happiness: why mourn?- for ye must go."

(12)

Ah, yes; 'tis Nature's changeless, fixed decree,
New things must take the places of the Old:
So in the death of Winter do we see
The birth of Spring; and Summer hues unfold
To deepen into Autumn's ruddy gold.
On runs the tide of life - we cannot stay;
For we must change, while Change is uncontrolled:
Now majesty we see and now decay
For ever. And the lily blooms to fade away.

13

"Rise then!" – to us the call has come at last;
"Rise, and to higher heights your steps incline,
Though on the ruins of a mighty past
Climbing, to reach that mount whereon doth shine
Eternal Truth, that each may say ''Tis mine
Yon dazzling darkness from afar to scan,
And catch some broken light of the Divine':
And so to strive e'en on the shattered span
Of life to build you up unto the perfect man."

14

For as the skylark, that small soul of song,
When first on strainèd wing it seeks the sky,
Gives troublous music; then, far swept along,
Becomes a soaring melody on high
In heavens of light: so our once feeble cry
Will gather strength when we have left the Earth;
Though Earth be lovely, we must upward fly,
Called to a lovelier Heaven of passing worth,
Where many a glorious thought may find a glorious birth.

(13)

"Rise then!" – to us the call has come at last:
"Rise, and to higher heights your steps incline,
Though on the ruins of a mighty past
Climbing, to reach that mount whereon doth shine
Eternal Truth, that each may say 'Tis mine
Yon dazzling darkness from afar to scan,
And catch some broken light of the Divine':
And so to strive e'en on the shattered span
Of life to build you up unto the perfect man".

(14)

For as the skylark, that small soul of song,
When first on strained wing it seeks the sky,
Pours troublous music; then, far swept along,
Becomes a soaring melody on high
In heavens of light: So our once feeble cry
Will gather strength when we have left the Earth;
Though Earth be lovely, we must upward fly,
Called to a lovelier Heaven of passing worth,
Where many a glorious thought may find a glorious birth.

15

Thus shall we rise. And yet what matter where
If we be still unchanged? Still the bright fame,
The loyal hearts that toil and love and dare,
To win for that old School a deathless name:
What matter where if these be still the same?
Now fades the Old, the New day now is born,
And through its twilight shines afar the flame
Of purer glory from a purer morn:
Our eyes, our eyes are opening, and we see the Dawn!

16

We see the dawn. The dayspring from on high
Breaks on the larger world whereto we go
With twofold lustre: thence, through every cry,
Comes forth a vaster music, sweet and slow.
Thither we take our hearts, here leave our woe
To die amid the ashes of the dead;
Thither we take our hope and strength, to grow
Yet stronger on the upward path we tread,
And here we leave our weakness with a Time that's fled.

(15)

Thus shall we rise. And yet what matter where
If we be still unchanged? Still the bright fame,
The loyal hearts that toil and love and dare,
To win for that old School a deathless name:
What matter where if these be still the same?
Now fades the Old, the New day now is born,
And through its twilight shines afar the flame
Of purer glory from a purer morn:
Our eyes, our eyes are opening, and we see the Dawn!

(16)

We see the dawn. The dayspring from on high
Breaks on the larger world whereto we go
With twofold lustre: hence, through every cry,
Comes forth a vaster music, sweet and slow.
Thither we take our hearts, here leave our woe
To die amid the ashes of the dead;
Thither we take our hope and strength, to grow
Yet stronger on the upward path we tread,
And here we leave our weakness with a Time that's fled.

17

Old thoughts still live within our hearts to feed
The cherished memory of what once hath been
Of good and noble; such can never need
A mightier dew than love to keep them green,
Nor fade though that they love be now unseen.
Still may the tie of "Faith and Letters"[19] prove
Our glorious watchword, still our search be keen
By him whose name we bear, and One above
To whom our School was dedicate: His name is Love.

18

"Look up! Look up!" Such is the calling voice: –
A message which will ever lead aright.
We hear and answer: can we but rejoice
When such a message meets us 'mid the night
And calls us to a dawn of stronger sight?
For the last time we pace the well-loved halls;
We say "Farewell!", and then: "Let there be Light,"
And there is Light. We leave the dark'ning walls,
We lift our heads, look up, and welcome new Saint Paul's.

----◇---- Jan-May, 1884

(Prox. Acc. For Milton Prize, S. Paul's School. 1884)[20]

19 See the motto of St. Paul's School, "Fide Et Literis."

20 The prize went to R. J. Walker (*The Pauline*, II:12 [October 1884], 74), a son of the High Master (J. G. Cotton Minchin, *Our Public Schools: Their Influence on English History* [London: Swan Sonnenshein, 1901], p. 266). He became a clergyman and Greek master at St.Paul's (*The Journal of Education*, November 1, 1905, p. 764).

(17)

Old thoughts still live within our hearts to feed
The cherished memory of what once hath been
Of good and noble; such can never need
A mightier dew than love to keep them green,
Nor fade though that they love be now unseen.
Still may the tie of "Faith and Letters" prove
Our glorious watchword, still our stanch be Keen
By him whose name we bear, and One above
To whom our School was dedicate: His name is Love.

(18)

"Look up! Look up!" Such is the calling voice:-
A message which will ever lead aright.
We hear and answer: can we but rejoice
When such a message meets us 'mid the night
And calls us to a dawn of stronger sight?
For the last time we pace the well-loved halls;
We say "Farewell!", and then: "Let there be Light",
And there is Light. We leave the dark'ning walls,
We lift our heads, look up, and welcome new Saint Paul's.

Jan-May, 1884

(Prox. Acc. for Milton Prize, S. Paul's School, 1884)

An Outline Picture[21]

----◇----

Soft eyes and deep and blue as summer lakes
That catch the dawn: a laughter-loving face,
Bright with youth's blossom, as of one who wakes
Each day to a fairer world: pure maiden grace
And maiden coyness that can understand,
But will not: golden storm of hair, and dimpled hand.

----◇----

Aug. 1884.

21 The phrase as a type of poem seems to be Alexander's coinage.

An Outline Picture

Soft eyes and deep and blue as summer lakes
That catch the dawn: a laughter-loving face,
Bright with youth's blossom, as of one who wakes
Each day to a fairer world: pure maiden grace
And maiden coyness that can understand,
But will not: golden storm of hair, and dimpled hand.

Aug. 1884

Morning at Sea

----◇----

Far in the East

The sun was twinkling near the ocean's rims,
Late come from Orient chambers. On the waves
His restless beams were dancing far and wide,
Making a lacy network of soft lights,
Softer than those which at the gloaming hour
Trouble the twilight, sweeter than the smile
Dimpling a maiden's cheek with thoughts of love.
In furthest heaven a few fleecy clouds
Lay ranged, like snowdrops; but the sky around,
High vaulted into azure, was outspread
In depths of pale blue, which the sea beneath
Mimicked with darker shades, and laughed in glee.

(1882)

----◇----

Morning at Sea

Far in the East
The sun was twinkling near the ocean's rim,
Late come from Orient chambers. On the waves
His restless beams were dancing far and wide,
Making a lacy network of soft lights,
Softer than those which at the gloaming hour
Trouble the twilight, sweeter than the smile
Dimpling a maiden's cheek with thoughts of love.
In furthest heaven a few fleecy clouds
Lay ranged, like snowdrops; but the sky around,
High vaulted into azure, was outspread
In depths of pale blue, which the sea beneath
Mimicked with darker shades, and laughed in glee.

(1882)

August-tide

----◇----

Hand in hand they wandered alone,
And the night held her breath and the stars peeped out
And the moonlight splendours were all about
In the sweet soft dusk of that August-tide.

Heart to heart they wandered alone,
And Nature's mute music was lulled to rest,
But the sound of a singing was in their breast
'Mid the sweet dim dusk of the August-tide.

Hand in hand and heart to heart
For ever as one: and for ever the light
Of Love was their pillar of fire by night
As they wandered alone in the August-tide.

March 6, 1885

August-tide

Hand in hand they wandered alone,
And the night held her breath and the stars peeped out
And the moonlight splendours were all about
In the sweet soft dusk of that August-tide.

Heart to heart they wandered alone,
And Nature's mute music was lulled to rest,
But the sound of a singing was in their breast
'Mid the sweet dim dusk of the August-tide.

Hand in hand and heart to heart
For ever as one: and for ever the light
Of love was their pillar of fire by night
As they wandered alone in the August-tide.

March 6, 18

A Fragment of Love

----◇----

I

Man heard and held that God is Love,
That Love in beauty shining far
Falls like the flashing of a star
Across the darkness from above.

Man heard and held: his faith is true.
He felt that Love unchangeable
Spreads silent radiance over all;
He could not understand: he knew.

And yet the world is dull and dark;
It cannot catch the Love Divine,
And print it for a lasting sign
Upon its forehead, for a mark

Of faithful Charity and Hope:
The many will not reach a hand
To seize the Light: they idly stand
Amid the gloom and idly grope.

A Fragment of Love

I

Man heard and held that God is Love,
That Love in beauty shining far
Falls like the flashing of a star
Across the darkness from above.

Man heard and held: his faith is true.
He felt that Love unchangeable
Spreads silent radiance over all;
He could not understand: he knew.

And yet the world is dull and dark;
It cannot catch the Love Divine,
And print it for a lasting sign
Upon its forehead, for a mark

Of faithful Charity and Hope:
The many will not reach a hand
To seize the Light: they idly stand
Amid the gloom and idly grope.

The age is callous and impure:
It speaks of human love with scorn;
It knows not that true love is born
From One who dloves: while He endure,

So long must pure love ever spring
From depths of His pure loving heart;
In loving, we with Him have part,
And, loving, rise on nobler wing.

That one true heart to one should yearn
In chastened union of Love
Is by the gift of Him above
Who loves; : true love from Him we learn.

And whatsoever love He give,
Methinks ‘tis good to hold it fast,
To brighten from a loveless past
To love by Him, in Him to live.

The age is callous and impure:
It speaks of human love with scorn;
It knows not that true love is born
From One who loves: while He endure,

So long must pure love ever spring
From depths of His pure loving heart;
In loving, we with Him have part,
And, loving, rise on nobler wing.

That one true heart to one should yearn
In chastened union of Love
Is by the gift of Him above
Who loves: true love from Him we learn.

And whatsoever love He give,
Methinks 'tis good to hold it fast,
To brighten from a loveless past
To love by Him, in Him to live.

II

Calm lies the Church with solemn spire
That mounts and mounts in blue serene,
And calm September's fading green
Touched with September's touch of fire.

The trees have caught a richer hue
To meet the richer Autumn morns:
Above, as each swift dayspring dawns,
A whiter cloud, a deeper blue.

The winding paths and mossy ways
Are thick with Autumn's tarnished gold;
There large-eyed Peace delights to hold
Her quiet reign, and muse and gaze.

There Silence dwells and Solitude;
No thought of worldly care or wrong:
And rarely the full-throated song
Tells of the redbreast's joyous mood.

II

Calm lies the Church with solemn spire
That mounts and mounts in blue serene,
And calm September's fading green
Touched with September's touch of fire.

The trees have caught a richer hue
To meet the richer Autumn morns:
Above, as each swift dayspring dawns,
A whiter cloud, a deeper blue.

The winding paths and mossy ways
Are thick with Autumn's tarnished gold;
There large-eyed Peace delights to hold
Her quiet reign, and muse and gaze.

There Silence dwells and Solitude:
No thought of worldly care or wrong:
And rarely the full-throated song
Tells of the redbreast's joyous mood.

Fair laughs the sunlight overhead,
    While, underneath, the white graves shine,
    And gleaming teach us, line on line,
The names that name the silent dead.

III.

Life amid death. ‘Tis ever so.
    Above the ruins of the year
    The snowdrops lift their heads, and peer,
Spotless, across the spotless snow.

Life amid death. The thoughtful eye
    Can see the cradle in the tomb:
    One passing moment brings the doom
Of one to live and one to die.

Life amid death. We cannot see
    Those silent dead, but know they give –
    Living to die, dying to live –
Large hope of that which is to be.

Fair laughs the sunlight overhead,
While, underneath, the white graves shine,
And gleaming track us, line on line,
The names that name the silent dead.

III.

Life amid death. 'Tis ever so.
Above the ruins of the year
The snowdrops lift their heads, and peer,
Spotless, across the spotless snows.

Life amid death. The thoughtful eye
Can see the cradle in the tomb:
One passing moment brings the doom
Of one to live and one to die.

Life amid death. We cannot see
Those silent dead, but know they live -
Living to die, dying to live -
Large hope of that which is to be.

Life amid death. Yea, life is there,
Young life, amid those silent dead,
Who hear not now the voice and tread
That break but seldom on the air,

Nor hear the two whose footsteps part
The tarnished gold of autumn days,
Who, winding down the winding ways,
Come, hand to hand and heart to heart.

IV

Fair laughs the sunlight from above:
Hoeart unto heart and hand to hand
They come: today they understand:
They love: it is enough: they love.

‘Tis their first day of sympathy,
Of conscious union and trust;
They do but love because they must;
They know not and they care not why.

Life amid death. Yea, life is there,
Young life, amid those silent dead,
Who hear not now the voice and tread
That break but seldom on the air,

Nor hear the two whose footsteps part
The tarnished gold of autumn days,
Who, winding down the winding ways,
Come, hand to hand and heart to heart.

IV

Fair laughs the sunlight from above:
Apart unto heart and hand to hand
They come: today they understand:
They love: it is enough: they love.

'Tis their first day of sympathy,
Of conscious union and trust;
They do but love because they must;
They know not and they care not why.

Their every thought is each for each;
They have no thought of worldly wrong,
Nor heed they the full-throated song,
And murmurs from the murmuring beech.

They feel that their two lives are one
Henceforth for evil or for good:
They feel upsurging in their blood
Love and Love's mystic union:

And know that union is a sign
They will not part for evermore,
And know a joy unknown before,
A life more deep and more divine.

V.

O Love, how lovely thou dost seem
In all thy purity and truth!
How tender, when thou touchest youth
With beauties of a beauteous dream!

Their every thought is each for each;
They have no thought of worldly wrong,
Nor heed they the full-throated song,
And murmurs from the murmuring beech.

They feel that their two lives are one
Henceforth for evil or for good:
They feel upsurging in their blood
Love and Love's mystic union:

And know that union is a sign
They will not part for evermore,
And know a joy unknown before,
A life more deep and more divine.

V.

O Love, how lovely thou dost seem
In all thy purity and truth!
How tender, when thou touchest youth
With beauties of a beauteous dream!

How bright, when as a morning star
Thou beamest on the dawn of life,
Piercing the thunder-clouds of strife,
O Love, and shining from afar;

Or when with angel-eyes above
Thou watchest through the starry night,
Scattering the lustres of thy light,
O fair, unfathomable Love!

* * * * *

Jan– 1885

How bright, when as a morning star
Thou beamest on the dawn of life,
Piercing the thunder-clouds of strife,
O Love, and shining from afar;

Or when with angel-eyes above
Thou watchest through the starry night,
Scattering the lustres of thy light,
O fair, unfathomable Love!

* * * * *

Jan-1885

The Dead Poet

----◇----

Lay garlands on his grave without a sigh;
Let him lie peacefully: he is not dead;
For he was one who sang with heart and head
Some of God's music, and that cannot die.
A brightness of the dawn was in his eye,
The smile and teardrop of the skies of May:
The dawn has deepened into larger day;
The smile and teardrop live abidingly.
Come, plant a heaven-blue violet in the sod,
And ~~hear~~ see the skylark soaring over him
And singing: he too soaring sang to God
And loved the upper light. Our eyes are dim
With ~~po~~ tracing the high pathway that he trod. –
But hush! the skylark sings his requiem.

----◇---- April 15/1885

The Dead Poet.

Lay garlands on his grave without a sigh;
Let him lie peacefully: he is not dead;
For he was one who sang with heart and head
Some of God's music, and that cannot die.
A brightness of the dawn was in his eye,
The smile and teardrop of the kiss of May:
The dawn has deepened into larger day;
The smile and teardrop live abidingly.
Come, plant a heaven-blue violet in the sod,
And see the skylark soaring over him
And singing: he too soaring sang to God
And loved the upper light. Our eyes are dim
With ~~to~~ tracing the high pathway that he trod.—
But hush! the skylark sings his requiem.

April 15/1

S. Paul at Athens.[22]

----◇----

Many there are, true children of the dust,
Whose eyes, life-long, are earthwards: Life is lust
Of hoarded wealth, Earth's broideries of gem
And glittering gold; Wisdom and Wealth for them
Have the same meaning. Haply some may find
A richer treasure in the human mind,
In soaring science and the poet's love
Matched with the sage's wit; or love yet more
The silent sweetness of the summer lea,
The rippling sweetness of the laughing sea,
And all the innumerable voiceless song
Of Nature and her choir; she rights their wrong,
And calms their passions from her open book,
Nor ever lacks a moment or a nook
To show her beauty: all the good they see
They fashion into Gods, and bow the knee;
Each spot, to them an altar or a shrine,
Has something of a God, something divine.
Many there are: and yet they gaze to Earth;

22 See Acts 17:16-34.

S. Paul at Athens.

Many there are, true children of the dust,
Whose eyes, life-long, are Earthwards: Life is lust
Of hoarded wealth, Earth's broideries of gem
And glittering gold; Wisdom and Wealth for them
Have the same meaning. Haply some may find
A richer treasure in the human mind,
In soaring Science and the poet's lore
Matched with the sage's wit; or love yet more
The silent sweetness of the summer lea,
The rippling sweetness of the laughing sea,
And all the innumerable voiceless song
Of Nature and her choir; she rights their wrong,
And calms their passions from her open book,
Nor ever lacks a moment or a nook
To show her beauty: all the good they see
They fashion into Gods, and bow the Knee;
Each spot, to them an altar or a shrine,
Has something of a God, something divine.
Many there are: and yet they gaze to Earth;

Their thoughts are earthwards: none has seen the birth
Of the bright sun, none lifted up his eye
To meet the dayspring dawning in the sky.
No, none has seen the sunrise: yet they yearn
Sometimes for what they know not, sometimes burn
With the vague throbbing of a fervid heat
And unknown hopes, which, like the strong swift beat
Of a strong eagle-wing within the breast,
Soar high, then droop.
A glory in the west:
Long, lingering lines of brightness; side by side,
Slow crimson bars; a dusk of eventide;
A wide sky fathomless; a fiery sun
Dying afar. The day was nearly done,
But in the rose-red cloudlets rested still
Remembrance of its beauty: tower and hill
Loomed softly through the gloaming, where, alone,
Up the long streets, unheeded and unknown,
Passed with slow foot the Apostle of the East.
One of Earth's greatest, yet of men the least,
Paul paced the shadowy city, while around
Strange faces made the strangeness more profound,
The loneliness more lone: no heart was there

Their thoughts are Earthwards: none has seen the birth
Of the bright sun, none lifted up his Eye
To meet the dayspring dawning in the sky.
No, none has seen the sunrise: yet they yearn
Sometimes for what they Know not, sometimes burn
With the vague throbbing of a fervid heat
And unknown hopes, which, like the strong swift beat
Of a strong Eagle-wing within the breast,
Soar high, then droop.

A glory in the west:
Long, lingering lines of brightness; side by side,
Slow crimson bars; a dusk of crentise;
A wide sky fathomless; a sorry sun
Dying afar. The day was nearly done,
But in the rose-red cloudlets rested still
Remembrance of its beauty: tower and hill
Loomed softly through the gloaming, where, alone,
Up the long streets, unheeded and unknown,
Passed with slow foot the Apostle of the East.
One of Earth's greatest, yet of men the least,
Paul paced the shadowy city, while around
Strange faces made the strangeness more profound,
The loneliness more lone: no heart was there

To sympathise and sanctify his care.
Amid the dusk he saw more dimly shine
The frozen fire of Pallas' lofty shrine;
He saw each fane and statue, like a dream,
Wrapt in mute music, through the twilight gleam;
He saw their wonders, wondering at them all,
And watched the shadows of the evening fall.
Ah! Eventide at Athens. All her day
Is fading, fast as summer mists, away:
Whither have fled the splendours of her name,
Whither the children of her morning fame,
Those great and lovely of her lovely land?
Alas, all gone! No more her laurelled band
Strike their bold harps; no more the empurpled peaks
Whisper her Muse's song and, when she speaks,
Fling thunders of sonorous eloquence;
No more they watch while, in glad reverence,
At Freedom's feet, her sages spread their store
Of gold and frankincense and myrrh: no more
A star stands over her to mark the place
Where Athens lies, the greatest of her race,
With many great and good who share her tomb.

To sympathise and sanctify his care.
Amid the dusk he saw more dimly shine
The frozen fire of Pallas' lofty shrine;
He saw each fane and statue, like a dream,
Wrapt in mute music, through the twilight gleam;
He saw their wonders, wondering at them all,
And watched the shadows of the evening fall.

Ah! Corinth at Athens. All her day
Is fading, fast as Summer mists, away:
Whither have fled the splendours of her name,
Whither the children of her morning fame,
Those great and lordly of her lordly land?
Alas, all gone! No more her laurelled band
Strike their bold harps; no more the empurpled peaks
Whispers her Muse's song and, when she speaks,
Fling thunders of sonorous eloquence;
No more they watch while, in glad reverence,
At Freedom's feet, her sages spread their store
Of gold and frankincense and myrrh: no more
A star stands over her cave to mark the place
Where Athens lies, the greatest of her race,
With many great and good who share her tomb.

No longer is she Athens, the pure home
Of wise and pure Athene. All her day
Is fading, like a broken hope, away,
And all her blue with cloud is overcast;
Though yet a radiance lingers to the last,
Bright with a dying beauty that might tell
Her noontide glories, did it not too well
Speaks of the night~~,~~ swift rising in her sky.
'Tis thus the rocket through the heavens on high
Surges, and flashes its fierce trail of fire,
A river of light, that rushes high and higher
Till its strong force is spent at last, and lo!
A shower of sudden stars, that pause, and glow
With myriad hues a moment's space; ~~when~~ but when
The moment's space is done, they drop, and then
Darkness.

And Paul paced 'mid the failing light
And watched where fell the shadows of the night.

But now he came to where an altar stood
With this inscription: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD:
And vexed his soul. For Athens was the shrine
Of many Gods, and that was most divine

No longer is she Athens, the pure home
Of wise and pure Athene. All her day
Is fading, like a broken hope, away,
And all her blue with cloud is overcast;
Though yet a radiance lingers to the last,
Bright with a dying beauty that might tell
Her noontide glories, did it not too well
Speak of the night, swift rising in her sky.
'Tis thus the rocket through the heavens on high
Surges, and flashes its fierce trail of fire,
A river of light, that rushes high and higher
Till its strong force is spent at last, and lo!
A shower of sudden stars, that pause, and glow
With myriad hues a moment's space; ~~when~~ but when
The moment's space is done, they drop, and then
Darkness.

And Paul paced 'mid the failing light
And watched where fell the shadows of the night.

But now he came to where an altar stood
With this inscription: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD:
And vexed his soul. For Athens was the shrine
Of many gods, and that was most divine

To her, that was most human: every grace
And every power of Nature found a place
Among her idols. Darkly on deep seas
Her children drove before a doubtful breeze,
While, as the lustrous eye of Greece grew dim,
The shattered lights grew more, nor knew they Him
That was, and is, the one great glorious Star.
Their Gods, unmoved and careless, dwelt afar:
He, strong to save, and ever from above
Bending the everlasting arms of Love.
They knew Him not; and yet to that Unknown
They built an altar, silently to own
His hidden greatness, while they felt the breast
Heave suddenly at times with wild unrest,
Vague coursings through the channels of their blood,
Dim aspirations after some high good,
Strange burning thoughts that made them fall in awe
Before the mystic Presence and adore: –
Such thrills, perchance, as teach the nightingale
Under a night of stars to lift his wail
And weep, until his tawny throat might burst: –
They knew not why; for ‘tis the sudden thirst
Of that divinity in man which cries,

To her, that was most human: every grace
And everyone power of Nature found a place
Among her idols. Darkly on deep seas
Her children drove before a doubtful breeze,
While, as the lustrous eye of Greece grew dim,
The shattered lights grew more, nor knew they Him
That was, and is, the one great glorious Star,
Their eyes, unmoved and careless, dwelt afar;
He, strong to save, and ever from above
Binding the everlasting arms of Love.
They knew Him not; and yet to that UnKnown
They built an altar, silently to own
His hidden greatness, while they felt the breast
Heave suddenly at times with wild unrest,
Vague cravings through the channels of their blood,
Dim aspirations after some high good,
Strange burning thoughts that made them fall in awe
Before the mystic Presence and adore:—
Such thrills, perchance, as teach the nightingale
Under a night of stars to lift his wail
And weep, until his tawny throat might burst:—
They knew not why; for 'tis the sudden thirst
Of that divinity in man which cries,

And will not be appeased: where'er he flies,
Man cannot flee from that immortal Self;
To which all mortal pomp and mortal pelf
Are nothing worth. So Athens, though she lay
In realms of gloom that marred the better day,
Felt, like a far flash o'er a troublous sea,
The fiery touch of immortality.

And now the dusk grew darker through the land
When on the Hill of Mars Paul took his stand
Alone, to plead his cause. 'Twas there of old,
In that same spot, another true and bold,
Another of mean aspect and large heart,
Great Socrates, had striven to impart
His glimpses of the Truth. Paul was alone
Amid an eager throng, to all unknown,
Yet dauntless: calm as from an August sky
Looks the full moon when all the revelry
Of cloudlet-chase has ceased. On every side,
The many Gods: above, pure, solemn, wide,
The vault of Heaven – God's Heaven. They hearkened there,
Those self-wrapt sages, filled with hopes like air
That swells in bubbles, meets the summer sun,

And will not be appeased: where'er he flies,
Man cannot flee from that immortal Self,
To which all mortal pomp and mortal pelf
Are nothing worth. So Athens, though she lay
In realms of gloom that marred the better day,
Felt, like a far flash o'er a troublous sea,
The fiery touch of immortality.

And now the dusk grew darker through the land
When on the Hill of Mars Paul took his stand
Alone, to plead his cause. 'Twas there of old,
In that same spot, another true and bold,
Another of mean aspect and large heart,
Great Socrates, had striven to impart,
His glimpses of the Truth. Paul was alone
Amid an eager throng, to all unknown,
Yet dauntless: calm as from an August sky
Looks the full moon when all the revelry
Of cloudlet-chase has ceased. On every side,
The many gods: above, pure, solemn, wide,
The vault of Heaven — God's Heaven. They blanketed there,
Those self-wrapt sages, filled with hopes like air
That swells in bubbles, meets the summer sun,

Then bursts in nothingness, and all is done; –
Wise they in folly, men of little soul,
Who grasped at little truths, and missed the whole
He told new things, and they paid willing heed
To what was new: he told them a new creed
Of love and life; he told them of a God,
A one and only, Whose near footsteps trod
The pathway of each soul, His hand a shield
To Life's dim flame. Then would he have revealed
The grand scheme of the ages, and the life
That is to be; but they, with sudden strife
Clashed in harsh discord; : and Paul held his peace.
In peace he turned and left them. Slowly cease
The many murmurings of the sleeping day.
He spoke and failed, peacefully: but straightway
O'er Athens from above the word has sped
'Let there be Light!'; and soon the aegis dread
And terrible of Pallas was to fall
Before the Christ, the conqueror of all;
Soon was the God, they knew not, to be known.
From Paul 'twas hidden then: he passed alone,
With morning in his face, but saw no morn,
No coming daybreak of a larger dawn.

Then bursts in nothingness, and all is done;—
Wise they in folly, men of little soul,
Who grasped at little truths, and missed the whole.
He told new things, and they paid willing heed
To what was new: he told them a new creed
Of love and life; he told them of a God,
A one and only, Whose near footsteps trod
The pathway of each soul, His hand a shield
To Life's dim flame. Then would he have revealed
The grand scheme of the ages, and the life
That is to be; but they, with sudden strife
Clashed in harsh discord; and Paul held his peace.
In peace he turned and left them. Slowly cease
The many murmurings of the sleeping day.
He spoke and failed, peacefully: but straightway
O'er Athens from above the word had sped
'Let there be Light!'; and soon the aegis dread
And terrible of Pallas was to fall
Before the Christ, the Conqueror of all;
Soon was the God, they Knew not, to be Known.
From Paul 'twas hidden Then: he passed alone,
With morning in his face, but saw no morn,
No coming daybreak of a larger dawn.

Yet, as he turned and left them, still God's sky
Looked down upon him with its peaceful eye,
Till every voice was hushed to silence, save
The far-off ~~at~~ anthem of the rough blue wave.

He spoke and failed.

And now the stars were out,
And dim mysterious shades lay all about, –
Though not in Heaven, – and all the purple flush
Had deepened into dark, and all the blush
That lit the west faded in fading light,
And Athens lay enshrouded by the night.

----◇----

Jan-March, 1885

(Milton Prize Poem at S. Paul's School, Apposition, 1885)[23]

23 Apposition in 1885 was held July 15. See the introduction for some details. The subject for the competition had been set the previous autumn (*The Pauline*, 2:12 [October 1884], 270)

Yet, as he turned and left them, still Gods sky
Looked down upon him with its graceful eye,
Till Gray voice was hushed to silence, save
The far-off sea anthem of the roughs blue wave.

He spoke and failed.

And now the stars were out,
And dim mysterious shades lay all about,-
Though not in Heaven,- and all the purple flush
Had deepened into dark, and all the blush
That lit the west faded in fading light,
And Athens lay enshrouded by the night.

Jan-March, 18

(Milton Prize Poem at S. Paul's School, Apposition, 1885

The Place of Peace

I

Calm is the summer lea
When the peaceful shades of even
Drown the peaceful blue of heaven,
And the day dies silently:
Calm is the summer sea
When the waves lie restfully,
When no more the storm's rude motion
Breaks the quick bright smile of ocean,
And no more the strife is striven: –
But calmer yet his calm who lies
In Love's eternal sympathies –

The Place of Peace.

I

Calm is the summer sea
When the peaceful shades of even
Drown the peaceful blue of heaven,
And the day dies silently:
Calm is the summer sea
When the waves lie restfully,
When no more the storm's rude motion
Breaks the quick bright smile of ocean,
And no more the strife is striven:—
But calmer yet his calm who lies
In Love's eternal sympathies—

II

Their calm ~~can never~~ is swiftly ~~l~~past:
Nature's calm is ever fleeing;
Storm and sunshine make her being,
And she knows no length of peace: –
Her calm can never last
In moods whose changes never cease;
'Tis the storm that calls the calm,
'Tis the bruising brings the balm,
Darkness heralds truest seeing: –
But Love is man's peace in a world forgot;
For Love is God, God Love: God changes not.

Aug. 14: 1885

II

Their calm ~~can never~~ is swiftly fast:
Nature's calm is ever fleeing;
Storm and sunshine make her being,
And she knows no length of peace:-
Her calm can never last
In moods whose changes never cease;
'Tis the storm that calls the calm,
'Tis the bruising brings the balm,
Darkness heralds truest seeing:-
But Love is man's peace in a world forgot;
For Love is God, God Love: God changes not.

Aug. 14: 188

Truth and Error

----◇----

Truth came to me and said
"I give myself to thee":
But I looked, and she was bright,
Far too dazzling for my sight,
And I said, "Nay, I am young,
And mine heart is full of lightness,
And mine eyes unused to brightness,
Life's deep music yet unsung: –
Give not thyself to me!"

Then Error came and said
"I give myself to thee":
And I looked, and she was bright,
Yet not dazzling to my sight,
And I said, "Ah, beauteous one,
Thine heart too, I feel, hath lightness,
And mine eyes can bear thy brightness:
Now Life's music hath begun: –
Yea, give thyself to me!"

Truth and Error.

Truth came to me and said,
"I give myself to thee:"
But I looked, and she was bright,
Far too dazzling for my sight,
And I said, "Nay, I am young,
And mine heart is full of lightness,
And mine eyes unused to brightness,
Life's deep music yet unsung:-
Give not thyself to me!"

Then Error came and said,
"I give myself to thee:"
And I looked, and she was bright,
Yet not dazzling to my sight,
And I said, "Ah, beauteous one,
Thine heart too, I feel, hath lightness,
And mine eyes can bear thy brightness:
Now Life's music hath begun:-
Yea, give thyself to me!"

But as I went away

To take her unto me,

Lo, Truth met us. Error fled

Pale, foul, ghastly. And I said,

“Now I see thee, Truth O Truth,

See thee, love thee, and adore:

I have seen Error; and before

Thou wast too bright for my dark youth: –

O take myself to thee!”

Aug 21: 1885.

But as I went away
To take her unto me,
Lo, Truth met us. Error fled
Pale, foul, ghastly. And I said,
"Now I see thee, Truth O Truth,
See thee, love thee, and adore:
I have seen Error; and before
Thou wast too bright for my dark youth:-
O take myself to thee!"

Aug 21: 1885.

False Stars

----◇----

I

A night of stars, an August night:
The falling meteors on high
Flash out, one after one, and write
Their line of brightness on the sky;
From dark they pass to dark, and leap
Into the deep.

II.

Stand here and think in the August night:
Yon silent gleams, unless they meet
Our earthly air, can give no light; –
Ev'n then, for only a moment's beat,
Those stars, that are no stars at all,
Flash, – and then fall.

III

And think again: Error is such;
False stars of falsehood cannot shine
In upper heav'ns; but when they touch
The earthly, seeming then divine,
They burst from nothingness to light,
Then back to night.

Sep 9/85

False Stars

I

A night of stars, an August night:
The falling meteors on high
Flash out, one after one, and write
Their line of brightness on the sky;
From dark they pass to dark, and leap
Into the deep.

II.

Stand here and think in the August night:
Your silent gleams, unless they meet
Our earthly air, can give no light;-
E'en then, for only a moment's beat,
Those stars, that are no stars at all,
Flash,- and then fall.

III

And think again: Error is such;
False stars of falsehood cannot shine
In upper heavens; but when they touch
The earthy, seeming then divine,
They burst from nothingness to light,
Then back to night.

Sep 9/85

—If—

----◇----

“What if it never had been – that ray
That smiles from the grim rugged winter-day?
What if the song that rises between
The black bare boughs had never been?
What if the moon had never riven,
Solemnly silent, the clouds of heaven,
To guide the traveller’s footsteps home?
If the light were dark and the music dumb?

What if it never had been – our Love?” * * * *

– “Then were the sky a void above,
With never a God to dwell therein,
And purge by Love the stain of sin:
Then were Life, Death, and Earth a dream,
And Truth were of the things that seem:
Then were it good to be dead and forgot.
‘If it had not been?’ – Dearest, ask not.
It must have been: in the homes above
God is: we love, for He is Love.”

----◇----

Sep. 12/85

– If –

"What if it never had been – that ray
That smiles from the grim rugged winter-day?
What if the song that rises between
The black bare boughs had never been?
What if the moon had never risen,
Solemnly silent, the clouds of heaven,
To guide the traveller's footsteps home?
If the light were dark and the music dumb?

What if it never had been – our Love?" * * * *

– "Then were the sky a void above,
With never a God to dwell therein,
And hunger by Love the stain of sin:
Then were Life Death, and Earth a dream,
And Truth were of the things that seem:
Then were it good to be dead and forgot.
'If it had not been?' – Dearest, ask not,
It must have been: in the homes above
God is: we love, for He is Love."

Sep. 12

Waiting for the Dawn

----◇----

Strong Sun of righteousness, shine forth,
And chase the darkling glooms of night;
Shine forth upon our helplessness:
We wait for Light.

For Light we wait: the night is dark –
No star in heaven to cheer our sight;
We dread the things we cannot see:
We wait for Light.

For Light we wait: the night is still –
No still small voice to guide aright;
We dread the things we cannot hear:
We wait for Light.

The night is dark and still: great Sun,
Dawn quickly on our darkened sight;
Shine forth, strong Sun of righteousness:
We wait for Light.

----◇----

Sep. 17/85

Waiting for the Dawn.

Strong Sun of righteousness, shine forth,
And chase the darkling glooms of night;
Shine forth upon our helplessness:
We wait for Light.

For Light we wait: the night is dark—
No star in heaven to cheer our sight;
We dread the things we cannot † see:
We wait for Light.

For Light we wait: the night is still—
No still small voice to guide aright;
We dread the things we cannot hear:
We wait for Light.

The night is dark and still: great Sun,
Dawn quickly on our darkened sight;
Shine forth, strong Sun of righteousness:
We wait for Light.

Sep. 17/85

A Beam in Darkness[24]

I

Pure violet, why growest here alone
In the dusk of the deep wood's gloom,
Where the shadows are dark and the rough winds moan,
And never a sound breaks the undertone
Of the whispering birds and the bees? –
And the violet said, in the voice of the breeze,
"God smiled: and His smile made me bloom."

II

Pure life-blossom, why growest lonely here
In the dusk of the great world's gloom,
Where care lies dark and the gathering tear
Weeps over the sins that scorch and sear,
And the hearts unregardful of love? –
And the pure life turned to the skies above:
"God smiled: and His smile made me bloom."

Jan 7: 1886

24 See Tennyson's "In Memoriam": "A beam in darkness: let it grow" (Prologue, l. 24).

A Beam in Darkness.

I

Pure violet, why growest here alone
In the dusk of the deep wood's gloom,
Where the shadows are dark and the rough winds moan
And never a sound breaks the undertone
Of the whispering birds and the bees?—
And the violet said, in the voice of the breeze,
"God smiled: and His smile made me bloom".

II

Pure life-blossom, why growest lonely here
In the dusk of the great world's gloom,
Where care lies dark and the gathering tear
Weeps over the sins that scorch and sear,
And the hearts unregardful of love?—
And the pure life turned to the skies above:
"God smiled: and His smile made me bloom".

Jan 7: 188

To Wordsworth

~~O thou~~ Great one, whom Nature never did betray
Because thou lov'dst her, teach us too to know
That love: teach us to watch the peaceful glow
Of sunset, and be peaceful; feel the day
~~Wan~~ ~~Dark~~ Black with the storm-cloud, till we stand and say –
'That is my mood!'; to love the rivers flow,
The ~~hills~~ stars and ~~flowers~~ ~~stars~~ birds and flowers; and ever so
In sympathy with Nature, grave or gay.
For Nature loved thee too: thou wast so dear
To her ~~great~~ large heart that she bestowed on thee
The beauty of herself, and tuned thine ear
To all her voices: so, amid the free,
Full sounding of thy verse, we seem to hear
The eternal music of Earth, Air and Sea.

Jan 8: 1886

Pub. ~~at~~ in "Academy" of Dec. 18: 1886[25]

(First pub. poem)

25 P. 411. The poem appeared also in the American periodical *Book News: A Monthly Survey*, March 1887, p. 230.

To Wordsworth

Great one,
O ~~Thou~~ whom Nature never did betray
Because thou lov'dst her, teach us too to know
That love: teach us to watch the peaceful glow
Of sunset, and be peaceful; feel the day
Black
~~Dark~~ with the stormcloud, till we stand and say—
'That is my mood!'; to love the river's flow,
The ~~hills~~ stars and ~~flowers~~ stars birds and flowers; and ever go
In sympathy with Nature, grave or gay.
For Nature loved thee too: thou wast so dear
To her ~~great~~ large heart that she bestowed on thee
The beauty of herself, and tuned thine ear
To all her voices: so, amid the free,
Full sounding of thy verse, we seem to hear
The eternal music of Earth, Air and Sea.

Jan 8: 1886

Pub. ~~at~~ in "Academy" of Dec. 18: 1886
(First pub. poem)

What and Whither?

----◇----

Life – is it wild, is it peaceful?

See the swift stream in the wood,

Murmuring under the branches.

Life – is it bad, is it good?

How does it flow, the swift river?

Dark with the gloom of the glade:

Bright with the light thro' the branches.

Life – is it sun, is it shade?

How does it end, the swift river?

Deep ~~Out~~ in the broad blue main,

Where all is still and eternal.

Life – is it loss, is it gain?

May 4: 1886

---

unsuccessful

Savonarola: (Newdigate)[26]

Jan – Feb. 1886

26 "Unsuccessful" is a later addition, to judge from the ink; the date, out of chronological sequence just here, suggests that Alexander entered the title on the first page that had space at the bottom and was close to other poems from the same period, i.e., after they had already been copied in to the notebook.

- What and Whither? -

Life – is it wild, is it peaceful?
See the swift stream in the wood,
Murmuring under the branches.
Life – is it bad, is it good?

How does it flow, the swift river?
Dark with the gloom of the glade:
Bright with the light thro' the branches.
Life – is it sun, is it shade?

How does it end, the swift river?
Deep ~~Out~~ in the broad blue main,
Where all is still and eternal.
Life – is it loss, is it gain?

May 4: 188

Savonarola: (unsuccessful Newdigate)

Jan – Feb. 18

By the Harbour

I

They are standing by the harbor,
Watching where the broad waves dream,
And the ship's white sails are flapping
High above blue ocean's gleam.

They are standing by the harbour,
And her hands are clasped in his:
One short moment – a 'God bless you!' –
One short moment, and a kiss.

II

She is waiting by the harbour
And a frown is on the sea,
And far out the sullen surges
Moan and murmur endlessly.

She is waiting by the harbour:
'Will he never come?' she cries.
Nothing answers save the sea-gull
Screaming from the dark'ning skies.

By the Harbour.

I

They are standing by the harbour,
Watching where the broad waves dream,
And the ship's white sails are flapping
High above blue ocean's gleam.

They are standing by the harbour,
And her hands are clasped in his:
One short moment – a 'God bless you!' –
One short moment, and a kiss.

II

She is waiting by the harbour
And a frown is on the sea,
And far out the sullen surges
Moan and murmur endlessly.

She is waiting by the harbour:
'Will he never come?' she cries.
Nothing answers save the sea-gull
Screaming from the darkening skies.

III

She is weeping by the harbour,
Where the wild rocks foam and roar,
As the waves beneath the whirlwind
Beat and break for evermore.

She is weeping by the harbour,
But no hand, no kiss has she:
For the great deep rolls above him,
And the tumult of the sea.

July 1: 1886

III

She is weeping by the harbour,
Where the wild rocks foam and roar,
As the waves beneath the whirlwind
Beat and break for evermore.

She is weeping by the harbour,
But no hand, no kiss has she:
For the great deep rolls above him,
And the tumult of the sea.

July 1: 18[illegible]

’Αστέρας εἰσαθρεῖς [27]

I

I told my love the words divine
Of that old Greek, one night, as we
Were standing ‘neath a moonlit sky: –
‘The stars thou watchest, Star of mine:
Ah, would that I were heaven, that I
Might gaze with myriad eyes on thee!’

II

In playful mood she quick replied,
‘Nay, dost thou wish as far from me
As heaven from earth to be away?’ –
When thus in playful mood she sighed,
What could I do but stoop and stay
The lips that spoke so naughtily?

July 6: 1886

27 “You look at stars.”

Ἀστέρας εἰσαθρεῖς.

I

I told my love the words divine
Of that old Greek, one night, as we
Were standing 'neath a moonlit sky:-
'The stars thou watchest, Star of mine:
Ah, would that I were heaven, that I
Might gaze with myriad eyes on thee!'

II

In playful mood she quick replied,
'Nay, dost thou wish as far from me
As heaven from earth to be away?'-
When thus in playful mood she sighed,
What could I do but stoop and stay
The lips that spoke so naughtily?

July 6: 1886

Daybreak

Day from the peaks of the mountain
    Whence we can watch the lone light
Burst through the chasms of darkness
    In pulses of crimson and white,
And the young fair day come dawning
    From the realms of the infinite.

See how the heavens grow larger
    With the quivering silver dawn,
Till the grey clouds glimmer with fire-flecks
    From the flame-torch of the Morn,
And a desolate star shines through them
    Like a bright life left forlorn.

A Star in the East! Yes, another
    Once flashed in the margin of night
To the Wise who were waiting the dayspring
    Of a purer and holier light: –
As it broke from the chasms of darkness
    And the blue of the infinite.

Daybreak

—

Day from the peaks of the mountain
Whence we can watch the long light
Burst through the chasms of darkness
In pulses of crimson and white,
And the young fair day come dawning
From the realms of the infinite.

See how the heavens grow larger
With the quivering silver dawn,
Till the grey clouds glimmer with fire-flecks
From the flame-torch of the Morn,
And a desolate star shines through them
Like a bright life left forlorn.

A Star in the East! Yes, another
Once flashed in the margin of night
To the Wise who were waiting the dayspring
Of a purer and holier light:-
As it broke from the chasms of darkness
And the blue of the infinite.

Dark was the gloom of the ages,
Bright was the moving Star,
As it shone with the strange new beauty
Of unseen worlds afar:
And it brought a new day to the nations
From the place where all daysprings are.

And now? – There is gloom on the ages,
And the toil of terrible fight,
And doubt and despair and destruction,
And strong men groping for light,
And strong hands stretched in yearning
To the veil of the infinite.

And now? – There is want and oppression,
And a cry goes up 'How long?'[28]
From the poor who are starved by the wealthy
And the weak who are crushed by the strong;
And life's clear sources are tainted
In the chaos of right and wrong.

28 See Elizabeth Barrett Browning's "The Cry of the Children," where "how long" becomes a part of the climactic indictment of the wealthy and powerful; if Alexander had "The Cry of the Children" in mind, his poem reads as an optimistic riposte to Browning's, reasserting the benevolent universe she queries.

Dark was the gloom of the ages,
Bright was the moving Star,
As it shone with the strange new beauty
Of unseen worlds afar:
And it brought a new day to the nations
From the place where all dayspring are.

And now?– There is gloom on the ages,
And the toil of terrible fight,
And doubt and despair and destruction,
And strong men groping for light,
And strong hands stretched in yearning
To the veil of the infinite.

And now?– There is want and oppression,
And a cry goes up 'How long?'
From the poor who are starved by the wealthy
And the weak who are crushed by the strong;
And life's clear sources are tainted
In the chaos of right and wrong.

Yet still shines the Star in the eastward
To tell us that Love is here;
And still there are tender voices
To strengthen and comfort and cheer;
And still there are works of mercy,
And Pity's priceless tear: –

~~Still Hope, while men die for good's sake~~ While men for the Truth are dying,
Or bravely live on through the night,
While the Star still shines in the eastward
With its beacon of undimmed light,
And a new herald-day comes dawning
From the far blue infinite.

July 8:1886

Yet still shines the Star in the eastward
To tell us that Love is here;
And still there are tender voices
To strengthen and comfort and cheer;
And still there are works of mercy,
And Pity's priceless tear:-

While men for the Truth are dying,
~~Still Hope, while men die for goods sake~~
Or bravely live on through the night,
While the Star still shines in the eastward
With its beacon of undimmed light,
And a new herald-day comes dawning
From the far blue infinite.

July

Sunbeam

I

Surely it is by living near to God
That she has caught such sunlight in her face, –
That merciful grace
Which He showers down to make the brown earth glad,
When Spring comes, and from every tree and sod
Breaks bud and bloom: Earth cannot then be sad.

II

For, when life's winter-winds blow drearily,
The sunlight of her face falls sweet on mine
Like a hope divine:
And to my heart she, in those sunny hours,
Brings back the primrose-time and wakes in me
All that I have of beauty and of flowers.

July 11: 1886

Sunbeam.

I

Surely it is by living near to God
That she has caught such sunlight in her face,—
That merciful grace
Which He showers down to make the brown earth glad,
When Spring comes, and from every tree and sod
Breaks bud and bloom: Earth cannot then be sad.

II

For, when life's winter-winds blow drearily,
The sunlight of her face falls surest on mine
Like a hope divine:
And to my heart she, in those sunny hours,
Brings back the primrose-time and wakes in me
All that I have of beauty and of flowers.

July 11: 1886

Wandering

I

A tiny sun-ray
Lost in way
And went astray.

II

I found it – where?
In bright eyes fair.
It nestled there.

III

‘Tis well to wander if we find at last
Sweet resting-place we knew not in the past.

July 13: 86

Wandering

I

A tiny sun-ray
Lost its way
And went astray.

II

I found it – where?
In bright eyes fair.
It nestled there.

III

'Tis well to wander if we find at last
Sweet resting-place we knew not in the past.

July

The Bee and the Butterfly

O Bee, gold-barred with the light of noon
Or the flash of the tempest-murk,
Tell me, hast thou seen in thy wanderings far
A Lily,[29] far fairer than thy lilies are
Whose nectar thou winnest at work?
Tell me, hast thou seen her by brake or by bower, –
My Lily, my beautiful flower.

O Butterfly, set with sapphire wings
And dashed with the moonlight's ray,
Tell me, hast thou seen in thy flutterings far
A Lily, far sweeter than thy lilies are
Whose nectar thou winnest at play?
Tell me, hast thou seen her in sunshine or shower, –
My Lily my beautiful flower.

But the Bee and the Butterfly pass;
They heed not the words that I say:
They are fickle, and flutter from bloom to bloom: –
I am constant: my heart has only room
For one Lily in work or in play;
Her only I look for by tarn and by tower,
My lily, my beautiful flower. July 13

29 Alexander married Lily Redfern in 1891.

The Bee and the Butterfly

O Bee, gold-barred with the light of noon
Or the flash of the tempest-murk,
Tell me, hast thou seen in thy wanderings far
A Lily, far fairer than thy lilies are
Whose nectar thou winnest at work?
Tell me, hast thou seen her by brake or by bower,-
~~At~~ My Lily, my beautiful flower.

O Butterfly, set with sapphire wings
And dashed with the moonlight's ray,
Tell me, hast thou seen in thy fluttrings far
A Lily, far sweeter than thy lilies are
Whose nectar thou winnest at play?
Tell me, hast thou seen her in sunshine or shower,-
My Lily, my beautiful flower.

But the Bee and the Butterfly pass;
They heed not the words that I say:
They are fickle, and flutter from bloom to bloom:-
I am constant: my heart has only room
For one Lily in work or in play;
Her only I look for by farm and by tower,
My Lily, my beautiful flower.

July 13

Together

I

Darling, put thy hand in mine:
With my hand close linked in thine,
Let us cross the rough wild sea.
Come with me!

II

Let us cross, and find together
Where God’s music sounds for ever
And God’s dawn breaks on the sea.
Come with me!

Together.

I

Darling, put thy hand in mine:
With my hand close linked in thine,
Let us cross the rough wild sea.
Come with me!

II

Let us cross, and find together
Where God's music sounds for ever
And God's dawn breaks on the sea.
Come with me!

To a Lily

----◇----

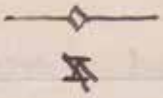
Ɨ

Frail darling of the red-lipped Spring
And my sweet darling too,
Was it an angel's foot that passed,
An angel's hand that threw
Thy beauty 'twixt the fallen leaves
And April's cloudless blue?

Was it an angel's smile to which
Old Earth smiled back with thee?
Was it an angel's tear that fed
Thy sunny purity,
And made thee lighten the cold brown land,—
God's gift to the world and me?

Oct 13:86

To a Lily.



'Frail darling of the red-lipped Spring
And my sweet darling too,
Was it an angel's foot that passed,
An angel's hand that threw
Thy beauty 'twixt the fallen leaves
And April's cloudless blue?

Was it an angel's smile to which
Old Earth smiled back with thee?
Was it an angel's tear that fed
Thy sunny purity?
And made thee lighten the cold brown land,
God's gift to the world and me?

Oct 13: 86

Ossian[30] to the Dying Year

I

Wild whirlwind of withered leaves,
That carpet the brown earth with scarlet and tawny gold
Before sad October's slow footstep,
Whence come ye? Whither go ye?
Or what is the place of your habitation?
Where is your abiding-place in the land?

II

See! the boughs grow gaunt!
The air is red with you!
The green banks take you and cover themselves for sorrow:
For October is sad; the teardrops are in her eyes:
She weeps for the death of the sweet glad year.

III

Hark! voices, pitiful voices,
Moaning among the branches!
Are they your voices, ye scattered fiery leaflets,
Wandering like lost souls, disembodied now of you,
And wailing over your beauty as it passes into dust? –
Or are they the voices of cold Ocean and the North?

30 Ossian was the narrator of a cycle, *The Poems of Ossian*, written by James Macpherson (first claimed by him to be translations from ancient sources). Alexander's poem finds its origin in such melancholia as that in "Berrathon."

Ossian to the Dying Year.

I

Wild whirlwind of withered leaves,
That carpet the brown earth with scarlet and tawny gol
Before sad October's slow footstep,
Whence come ye? Whither go ye?
Or what is the place of your habitation?
Where is your abiding-place in the land?

II

See! the boughs grow gaunt!
The air is red with you!
The green banks take you and cover themselves for sorrow
For October is sad; the teardrops are in her eyes:
She weeps for the death of the sweet glad year.

III

Hark! voices, pitiful voices,
Moaning among the branches!
Are they your voices, ye scattered fiery leaflets,
Wandering like lost souls, disembodied now of you,
And wailing over your beauty as it passes into dust?—
Or are they the voices of cold Ocean and the North

IIII

Ah, we too are leaves!

We wither and droop and pass away;

And we lie in the bosom of the brown earth

Waiting for a new birth to the light:

And for a little while there is a moaning where we have been,

A tearful moaning round the place that knew us once –

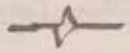
Yet not ~~long~~ for long: only a little while.

----◇----

– Oct 8:86

IIII

Ah, we too are leaves!
We wither and droop and pass away;
And we lie in the bosom of the brown earth
Waiting for a new birth to the light:
And for a little while there is a moaning where we have been,
A tearful moaning round the place that knew us once—
Yet not ~~long~~ for long: only a little while.



Oct 8: 81

A Smile

----◇----

Thanks, dear, for that bright smile! I wonder where
You got it from. Perhaps ‘twas caught that day
In Florence (you remember) when the sun
Seemed to grow brighter as I told my love
For the first time: and Arno blazed with gold:
And those sweet eyes looked love, and those sweet lips
Said ‘Yes,’ and kissed me with that same old smile.
More likely, though, your tender woman’s heart
Had brought it into birth like some frail flower,
A violet or a sunny daffodil,
That takes the frozen year and makes it glad
In its wild woods, by being beautiful.
And so your smile is you. God gave it you
To make the world a purer, better thing, –
Me most of all. Yet let me be content
To know it is, and seek not to know how.
Just smile again and kiss me…..
I was lonely,
Dear Love, until you came. Hark, how the wind
Howls round the lattice just as if the sea,
The fierce tempestuous sea, were at our doors!

A Smile.

Thanks, dear, for that bright smile! I wonder where
You got it from. Perhaps 'twas caught that day
In Florence (you remember) when the sun
Seemed to grow brighter as I told my love
For the first time: and Arno blazed with gold:
And those sweet eyes looked love, and those sweet lips
Said 'Yes', and kissed me with that same old smile.
More likely, though, your tender woman's heart
Has brought it into birth like some frail flower,
A violet or a sunny daffodil,
That takes the frozen year and makes it glad
In its wild woods, by being beautiful.
And so your smile is you. God gave it you
To make the world a purer, better thing,—
Me most of all. Yet let me be content
To know it is, and seek not to know how.
Just smile again and kiss me.....
I was lonely,
Dear Love, until you came. Hark, how the wind
Howls round the lattice just as if the Sea,
The fierce tempestuous Sea, were at our doors!

I was so lonely: and I heard the owl
Moan like a lost soul in the desolate night,
Out of yon forest: and I saw the moon,
High up above the fir-trees on the hill,
Struggle and struggle with a mass of clouds,
Black but light-fringed, that every moment seemed
Ready to whelm it like a lost Leander
Seeking his Hero over blackening waves.
Yet still it climbed the heavens. The night is dark,
And all the world is dark but for your love.
Ah! ‘tis a cruel world: it will not take
The good that’s offered it, but flings it back
Scornfully with a curse. ‘Tis very sad
To see so much of darkness everywhere,
And know men will not look nor seek the dawn.
Yet all is brighter when you smile on me,
And when the guiding beacon-light of love
Falls on my face. Love comes to me as dew
Upon the rose-bud: as the evening star
To way-worn traveller: or the first sunbeam
That springs across a land of April showers,
~~Betwixt the sun and~~ Calling a rainbow from the glooms above.
So, Dearest, I was thinking yesterday,

I was so lonely: and I heard the owl
Moan like a lost soul in the desolate night,
Out of yon forest: and I saw the moon,
High up above the fir-trees on the hill,
Struggle and struggle with a mass of clouds,
Black but light-fringed, that every moment seemed
Ready to whelm it like a lost Leander
Seeking his Hero over blackening waves.
Yet still it climbed the heavens. The night is dark,
And all the world is dark but for your love.
Ah! 'tis a cruel world: it will not take
The good that's offered it, but flings it back
Scornfully with a curse. 'Tis very sad
To see so much of darkness everywhere,
And know men will not look nor seek the dawn.
Yet all is brighter when you smile on me,
And when the guiding beacon-light of love
Falls on my face. Love comes to me as dew
Upon the rose-bud: as the evening star
To way-worn traveller: or the first sunbeam
That springs across a land of April showers,
~~Betwixt the sun and~~ calling a rainbow from the glooms above.
So, Dearest, I was thinking yesterday,

When, wandering through that tiny dell where oft
We drank the light of summer moons, I mused
How like a rainbow Life's imperfect are
Is flung across this sombre world of clouds
Betwixt the sun and rain. Gleaming it lies
Upon the darkness, with its central fires
Of hues innumerable: at either end
Shrouded in misty vapours that half hide
And half reveal the beauty. One brief hour
Sees it emerge and fade and die away:
And in another world than ours we seek
That which was wanting. So your love has brought
A rainbow on the clouds, and your dear smile
Made all the colours that play round me now,
Thus beautiful through you. Then kiss me, ŧLove;
Kiss me again, and smile on me once more,
And let the heavens pour down and light my life.

----◇----

Oct 13: 86

When, wandering through that tiny dell where oft
We drank the light of summer moons, I mused
How like a rainbow Life's imperfect arc
Is flung across this sombre world of clouds
Betwixt the sun and rain. Gleaming it lies
Upon the darkness, with its central fires
Of hues innumerable: at either end
Shrouded in misty vapours that half hide
And half reveal the beauty. One brief hour
Sees it emerge and fade and die away:
And in another world than ours we seek
That which was wanting. So your love has brought
A rainbow on the clouds, and your dear smile
Made all the colours that play round me now,
Thus beautiful through you. Then kiss me, Love;
Kiss me again, and smile on me once more,
And let the heavens pour down and light my life.

~~Among the Flowers~~ March-Blossoms

I

Gathering the buds of blue-eyed March
Yonder I see her now:
The wild white violets at her feet,
The robin on the bough.

II

I too must gather the blooms of spring:
Ah there! I have it now –
The look that lights, like sudden fire,
Her lip and cheek and brow.

III

We are but gathering early flowers:
What think you of it now,
Ye wild white violets at our feet,
~~Thou, Robin on the bough?~~ T
Thou, Robin on the bough?

Oct 24:86

[Pub. in "Time" for March, 1887][31]

31 *Time: A Monthly Magazine of Current Topics, Literature, and Art*, New Series, vol 5, p. 354. The square brackets are Alexander's; "March-Blossoms" also appeared in *Littell's Living Age*, April 23, 1887, p. 194.

March-Blossoms

~~Among the Flowers~~

I

Gathering the buds of blue-eyed March
Yonder I see her now:
The wild white ~~&~~ violets at her feet,
The robin on the bough.

II

I too must gather the blooms of spring:
Ah there! I have it now—
The look that lights, like sudden fire,
Her lip and cheek and brow.

III

We are but gathering early flowers:
What think you of it now,
Ye wild white violets at our feet,
~~Thou, Robin, on the bow~~
Thou, Robin, on the bough?

Oct 24:86

[Pub. in "Time" for March, 1887]

Passing

I

A cold white mist
In a cold blue sky,
By sunbeams kist
Till it fade and fly:

Like a seraph's breath
Just caught by the frost
And turned to white death,
With its music lost.

II

A round bright tear
In a round blue eye,
Still lingering here
While the clouds pass by:

Like a mermaid's gem
Just turned by the sun
To a dew diadem,
With its hardness gone.

Passing

I

A cold white mist
In a cold blue sky,
By sunbeams kist
Till it fade and fly:

Like a seraph's breath
Just caught by the frost
And turned to white death,
With its music lost.

II

A round bright tear
In a round blue eye,
Still lingering here
While the clouds pass by:

Like a mermaid's gem
Just turned by the sun
To a dew diadem,
With its hardness gone.

III

O mist, cold and white,
In the cold blue sky,
What is left you but flight
When the sunbeam goes by?

O tear, round and bright,
'Neath a tiny sad brow,
What is left you but flight
When I kiss you – as now?

Dec 30:86

III

O mist, cold and white,
In the cold blue sky,
What is left you but flight
When the sunbeam goes by?

O tear, round and bright,
'Neath a tiny sad brow,
What is left you but flight
When I kiss you — as now?

Dec 30: 86

Until The Sunset

Leaving no relic but a fading rose,
With one sweet farewell word shall I be gone:
I shall pass in through those white-glimmering gates,
And thou wilt stand without and wait alone.

The fading rose will blossom on thy breast
While thou art waiting in the misty Dawn,
Content to keep the frail bud near thy heart
And wait till sunset comes nor feel forlorn.

And thou wilt look with thy large eyes of love
Across the mists to seek me in the blue,
Thy face with that old wistful look upturned,
Peaceful in patience, purified and true.

And thou wilt stand where I can hear thy voice
Far from men's wailing and the world's harsh din,
Till the dawn grows to noon, noon fades to night,
And the gates open and thou enter in.

Dec 30:86

Until the Sunset

Leaving no relic but a fading rose,
With one sweet farewell word shall I be gone:
I shall pass in through those white-glimmering gates,
And thou wilt stand without and wait alone.

The fading rose will blossom on thy breast
While thou art waiting in the misty Dawn,
Content to keep the frail bud near thy heart
And wait till Sunset comes nor feel forlorn.

And thou wilt look with thy large eyes of love
Across the mists to seek me in the blue,
Thy face with that old wistful look upturned,
Peaceful in patience, purified and true.

And thou wilt stand where I can hear thy voice
Far from men's wailing and the world's harsh din,
Till the dawn grows to noon, noon fades to night,
And the gates open and thou enter in.

The Eremite

A great wide land, all shelterless and still,
Where no foot treads and no voice comes to me:
Only the murmur of a lonely rill
Foaming its way in sighing to the sea.

An image dark, colossal, desolate,
Frowning, rock-wrought, upon the empty plain:
Wild eyes that glitter with immortal hate:
One hand outstretched as if to slay the slain.

And all about the music of the breeze,
The glow of suns, the far-off caroling
Of light-encircled larks, the hum of bees,
Green moss and blue-bells and the scent of Spring.

Dec 31:86

The Hermits

A great wide land, all shelterless and still,
Where no foot treads and no voice comes to me:
Only the murmur of a lonely rill
Foaming its way in sighings to the sea.

An image dark, colossal, desolate,
Frowning, rock-wrought, upon the empty plain:
Wild eyes that glitter with immortal hate:
One hand outstretched as if to slay the slain.

And all about the music of the breeze,
The glow of suns, the far-off carolling
Of light-encircled larks, the hum of bees,
Green moss and blue-bells and the scent of Spring.

Dec 31: 86

A Christmas Tragedy

I

‘Tis the eve of the day He was born:
The blue-eyed Syrian morn
Laughed over Him first that day,
And was beautiful only for Him
Out there in the land far away
Of beautiful Bethlehem.
And the earth broke out into song,
And the angels sang and were glad –
Could any be sorrowful, any be sad? –
For He came to shiver the biting thong,
Bringing to all men joy and peace,
Bringing the chafèd spirit release
And rest from the burthen of wrong.
So the earth and the angels were glad.

II

‘Tis the eve of the day He was born:
The village is merry in many a home,
And everyone happy and gay
With the thought of pleasure to come:
Tomorrow – tomorrow is Christmas-day,

A Christmas Tragedy

I

'Tis the eve of the day He was born:
The blue-eyed Syrian morn
Laughed over Him first that day,
And was beautiful only for Him
Out there in the land far away
Of beautiful Bethlehem.
And the earth broke out into song,
And the angels sang and were glad—
Could any be sorrowful, any be sad?—
For He came to shiver the biting thong,
Bringing to all men joy and peace,
Bringing the chafed spirit release
And rest from the burthen of wrong.
So the earth and the angels were glad.

II

'Tis the eve of the day He was born:
The village is merry in many a home,
And everyone happy and gay
With the thought of pleasure to come:
Tomorrow—tomorrow is Christmas day,

And none tonight can be sighing or sad

When the earth and the angels are glad.

III

What is this? A woman here

With a baby at her breast,

Toiling along, young and fair,

Weary, not daring to rest;

For she must reach this evening

The town far out in the plain,

Where she may hope for shelter

And help in her trouble and pain.

And would you know her story? –

A piteous tale of woe:

Innocent once and happy

As the cowslips buds that blow

When April comes with the song of the Spring

And all the earth is aglow.

Tempted by one she trusted,

Tempted and forced to fall;

Then trampled by the traitor,

Thrust out and scorned by all.

Was it her fault, this sorrow

Which no other heart can take?

And none tonight can be sighing or sad
When the earth and the angels are glad.

III

What is this? A woman here
With a baby at her breast,
Toiling along, young and fair,
Weary, not daring to rest;
For she must reach this evening
The town far out in the plain,
Where she may hope for shelter
And help in her trouble and pain.
And would you know her story?—
A pitious tale of woe:
Innocent once and happy
As the cowslips buds that blow
When April comes with the song of the Spring
And all the earth is aglow.
Tempted by one she trusted,
Tempted and forced to fall;
Then trampled by the traitor,
Thrust out and scorned by all.
Was it her fault, this sorrow
Which no other heart can take?

Was it her fault, this sorrow
That makes her own heart break?....
So she has wandered hither,
Her baby in her arms,
Out from great London's tumults,
Out from its wild alarms,
Out from the light and the coldness, –
Anywhere out of the way, –
Wandering, weary and fainting,
Many a long long day.
Far she has come: whither goes?
We cannot tell: God knows.

IV

Darkly the night is falling
Over the land and sea,
Dark on the tiny village,
Dark on the forest and lea:
And the voice of the storm is in the air
And the sound of its revelry!

V

Then, as the shadows deepen,
She meets and asks help there
Of one who is hurrying homeward,

Was it her fault, this sorrow
That makes her own heart break?....
So she has wandered hither,
Her baby in her arms,
Out from great London's tumults,
Out from its wild alarms,
Out from the light and the coldness, –
Anywhere out of the way, –
Wandering, weary and fainting,
Many a long long day.
Far she has come: whither goes?
We cannot tell: God knows.

IV

Darkly the night is falling
Over the land and sea,
Dark on the tiny village,
Dark on the forest and lea:
And the voice of the storm is in the air
And the sound of its revelry!

V

Then, as the shadows deepen,
She meets and asks help there
Of one who is hurrying homeward,

Wealthy and free from care.

“Starving?” he cried impatient;

“There’s work for all who will:

Homeless? And ~~wha~~ yet what wonder,

What wonder if idlers fare ill?

No wages for those who will not work,

No room for an idler here:

And we have work of our own to do: –

But give her a penny, dear” –

This to the child who stood by his side,

As he carelessly strides away,

Thinking, perchance, of the good he has done,

Good words of advice, a good gift beside;

Not of the peace of Christmas-tide,

Not of the Christ who was born that day.

And she turns and goes weary~~-~~ily on.

VI

Wearily, wearily on,

While night grows black around,

Black, without moon or star,

And the storm begins afar

To murmur and mutter and sigh

In the gloom of the angry sky.

Wealthy and free from care.
"Starving?" he cries impatient;
"There's work for all who will:
Homeless? And who get what wonder,
What wonder if idlers fare ill?
No wages for those who will not work,
No room for an idler here:
And we have work of our own to do:—
But give her a penny, dear"—
This to the child who stood by his side,
As he carelessly strides away,
Thinking, perchance, of the good he has done,
Good words of advice, a good gift beside;
Not of the peace of Christmas-tide,
Not of the Christ who was born that day.
And she turns and goes wearily on.

VI

Wearily, wearily on,
While night grows black around,
Black, without moon or star,
And the storm begins afar
To murmur and mutter and sigh
In the gloom of the angry sky.

Wearily, wearily on,
Past the glimmering lights that beam
From the warm rooms near the street;
Past the patter of tiny feet
And the firelight's cheery gleam:
On to the darkness out there,
Where the branches creak and groan,
Where the fields are cold and bare
And the rough winds sob and moan.
Why is she out there all alone,
Out all alone in the gathering snows? –
We cannot tell: God knows.

VII

Fiercer the storm-flake flies,
Keener the storm-wind blows
Cold with the frost. Baby cries,
Waked from his broken sleep
By the roar of the storm as it goes:
And she turns to the empty skies
A white face, white as the snows.

VIII

O Christ! O Christ! Art Thou near
To catch those parched lips' cry,

Wearily, wearily on,
Past the glimmering lights that beam
From the warm rooms near the street;
Past the patter of tiny feet
And the firelights cheery gleam:
On to the darkness out there,
Where the branches creak and groan,
Where the fields are cold and bare
And the rough winds sob and moan.
Why is she out there all alone,
Out all alone in the gathering snows?—
We cannot tell: God knows.

VII

Fiercer the storm-flake flies,
Keener the storm-wind blows
Cold with the frost. Baby cries,
Waked from his broken sleep
By the roar of the storm as it goes:
And she turns to the empty skies
A white face, white as the snows.

VIII

O Christ! O Christ! Art Thou near
To catch those parched lips' cry,

To see that trembling tear

In her troublous yearning eye,

That quivering voice to hear

Calling Thee from the death-drift? O come:

Take them home to Thyself, take them home!

IX

Pitiless, pitiless, pitiless

Surges the wild white snow:[32]

Not a hand, not a sound, not a footstep,

Not a shelter where she may go:

Only the desolate loneliness

Of the fierce white drifting snow.

No light for the tear-dimmed eye

In the black, blank, barren sky:

No answer for the lonely moan

Save voices of the winter-wind –

The careless cruel winter-wind –

That whirls the cold flakes through the air

And whistles with his icy tone

And lays the snowy branches bare.

Nothing to help her anywhere:

Only, wherever she may go,

Pitiless, pitiless, pitiless,

32 Quite possibly unrelated, but an unusually fierce snow storm erupted on Boxing Day 1886 (see "The Snow Storm," *The Times*, December 28, 1886, p. 3a.

To see that trembling tear
In her troublous yearning eye,
That quivering voice to hear
Calling Thee from the death-drift? O come:
Take them home to Thyself, take them home!

IX

Pitiless, pitiless, pitiless
Surges the wild white snow:
Not a hand, not a sound, not a footstep,
Not a shelter where she may go:
Only the desolate loneliness
Of the fierce white drifting snow.
No light for the tear-dimmed eye
In the bleak, blank, barren sky:
No answer for the lonely moan
Save voices of the winter-wind —
The careless cruel winter-wind —
That whirls the cold flakes through the air
And whistles with his icy tone
And lays the snowy branches bare.
Nothing to help her anywhere:
Only, wherever she may go,
Pitiless, pitiless, pitiless,

The drifting of the wild white snow:
Everywhere round her, everywhere,
The fierce white deathly snow.

X

"Glory to God and peace on Earth" –
~~Ha~~ Hark to the sudden chime!
"Peace upon earth, goodwill to men" –
The bells of Christmas time!
O happy bells, ring loud, ring loud
The day of Bethlehem:
O solemn bells, ring low, ring low
A death-knell over them:
Bringing to her the remembrance
Of childhood's sunny glow,
Of years once glad and peaceful
And pure as the Christmas snow,
Of things that can never be now undone
That were done in the long ago.

XI

O Christ! O Christ! Art Thou near
To catch those parched lips' cry,
To see that trembling tear
In her troublous yearning eye,

The drifting of the wild white snow.
Everywhere round her, everywhere,
The fierce white deathly snow.

X

"Glory to God and peace on Earth"—
Hark to the sudden chimes!
"Peace upon earth, goodwill to men"—
The bells of Christmas time!
O happy bells, ring loud, ring loud
The day of Bethlehem:
O solemn bells, ring low, ring low
A death-knell over them:
Bringing to her the remembrance
Of childhood's sunny glad,
Of years once glad and peaceful
And pure as the Christmas snow,
Of things that can never be now undone
That were done in the long ago

XI

O Christ! O Christ! Art Thou near
To catch those parched lips' cry,
To see that trembling tear
In her troubled yearning eye,

That quivering voice to hear
Calling Thee from the death-drift? O come:
Take them home to Thyself, take them home!

XII

Some one will read tomorrow
A story of trouble and woe;
Some one will read tomorrow
Of two lives lost in the snow;
Some one tomorrow will murmur,
"Poor things! poor things! how sad!" –
Yet for a moment only:
'Tis Christmas, and all must be glad.

XIII

See how the red Dawn lightens,
And the dark clouds roll away:
See how the broad sky brightens
With the sun's strong conquering ray:
And a robin begins to warble
As the dawn grows into day.

XIV

Today is the day He was born:
The blue-eyed Syrian morn
Laughed over Him first today,

That quivering voice to hear
Calling Thee from the death-drift? O come:
Take them home to Thyself, take them home!

XII

Some one will read tomorrow
A story of Trouble and woe;
Some one will read tomorrow
Of two lives lost in the snow;
Some one tomorrow will murmur,
"Poor things! poor things! how sad!"—
Yet for a moment only:
'Tis Christmas, and all must be glad.

XIII

See how the red Dawn lightens,
And the dark clouds roll away:
See how the broad sky brightens
With the sun's strong conquering ray:
And a robin begins to warble
As the dawn grows into day.

XIV

Today is the day He was born:
The blue-eyed Syrian morn
Laughed over Him first today,

And was beautiful only for Him
Out there in the land far away
Of beautiful Bethlehem.
And the earth broke out into song,
And the angels sang and were glad –
Could any be sorrowful, any be sad? –
For He came to shiver the biting thong,
Bringing to all men joy and peace,
Bringing the chafèd spirit release
And rest from the burthen of wrong.
So the earth and the angels were glad.

XV

They find them there in the snow-drift wild
Peacefully lying side by side;
They find them there, the mother and child,
While the earth is bright with Christmas-tide:
Side by side, with the white snow under;
Side by side, ‘neath the cold blue sky:
Not even Death has parted asunder
Mother and child, and they peacefully lie,
Taken away – for the Christ is come –
Taken away to Himself, taken home.

----◇---- Dec. 1886

And was beautiful only for Him
Out there in the land far away
Of beautiful Bethlehem.
And the earth broke out into song,
And the angels sang and were glad—
Could any be sorrowful, any be sad?—
For He came to shiver the biting thong,
Bringing to all men joy and peace,
Bringing the chafèd spirit release
And rest from the burthen of wrong.
So the Earth and the angels were glad.

XV

They find them there in the snow-drift wild
Peaceful lying side by side;
They find them there, the mother and child,
While the earth is bright with Christmas-tide:
Side by side, with the white snow under;
Side by side, 'neath the cold blue sky:
Not even Death has parted asunder
Mother and child, and they peacefully lie,
Taken away — for the Christ is come —
Taken away to Himself, taken home.

Dec. 18

At Nightfall

A sunset sky, storm-red: black piles of cloud
Heaped on the lightning: piteous undertone
Of pine-woods as the storm begins to moan,
And leaves that quiver as its voice grows loud.

Nearer, uplifted to the angry sky,
Silent assemblages of solemn peaks,
Snow-crowned and still as those to whom one speaks
With awe and tells some great night-tragedy.

And in the cleft clouds where the thunders are,
Just opening for the light to tremble through,
A stainless spot of everlasting blue,
And in the blue one desolate white star.

Jan 1: 1887

At Nightfall.

A sunset sky, storm-red: black piles of cloud
Heaped on the lightning: piteous undertone
Of pine-woods as the storm begins to moan,
And leaves that quiver as its voice grows loud.

Nearer, uplifted to the angry sky,
Silent assemblages of solemn peaks,
Snow-crowned and still as those to whom one speaks
With awe and tells some great night-tragedy.

And in the cleft clouds where the thunders are,
Just opening for the light to tremble through,
A stainless spot of everlasting blue,
And in the blue one desolate white star.

Jan 1: 1887

Sea-Dreams

Hot noon upon a great green sea of glass:
No wavelet stirs the levels of sun-gold;
The waters, lying wide and foamless, hold
White pictures of the sea-gulls as they pass.

Far off, a long brown line of rocky land
Capped with red gables and a grey church-spire:
A mountain with its pinnacles of fire
Behind a wilderness of yellow sand.

And out amid the sea the silver trace
Of one small boat that slowly leaves the shores,
Urged by the drowsy dip of rhythmic oars,:
And in the boat two sitting, face to face.

Jan 1: 87

Pub. in “Cassell’s Magazine” for June: 1887[33]

33 P. 429 (illustrated). “Sea Dreams” was also printed in *Littell’s Living Age*, October 1/8, 1887.

Sea-Dreams.

Hot noon upon a great green sea of glass:
No wavelet stirs the levels of sun-gold;
The waters, lying wide and foamless, hold
White pictures of the sea-gulls as they pass.

Far off, a long brown line of rocky land
Capped with red gables and a grey church-spire:
A mountain with its pinnacles of fire
Behind a wilderness of yellow sand.

And out amid the sea the silver trace
Of one small boat that slowly leaves the shores,
Urged by the drowsy dip of rhythmic oars:
And in the boat two sitting, face to face.

Jan 1: 8

Pub. in "Cassell's Magazine" for June, 1887

Peace and the Sword

Walls gaunt and shattered, half-decayed and grey,
Swept by the breeze that tremulously sighs
With voices of sad ceaseless memories
Thro' empty halls that glimmer to the day.

Bare towers which once the thunder-bolt of war
Smote terribly when foemen pressed around,
Armed with red flame and hatred, and the sound
Throbbed like an earthquake through the hills afar.

And on the grass a little child alone,
Sleeping, gold-curled, with curtained eyes of blue:
A tuft of primrose-buds: a gleam of dew:
A broken sunbeam falling on the stone.

Jan 6: 87

~~Pub. in "Cassell's Magazine" for~~

Peace and the Sword

Walls gaunt and shattered, half-decayed and grey,
Swept by the breeze that tremulously sighs
With voices of sad ceaseless memories
Thro' empty halls that glimmer to the day.

Bare towers which once the thunder-bolt of war
Smote terribly when foemen pressed around,
Armed with red flame and hatred, and the sound
Throbbed like an earthquake through the hills afar.

And on the grass a little child alone,
Sleeping, gold-curled, with curtained eyes of blue:
A tuft of primrose-buds: a gleam of dew:
A broken sunbeam falling on the stone.

Jan 6: 87

r. in "Cassell's Magazine" for

Sub Lucem[34]

Low music from the birds that ~~charms the air~~ steals afar

Over a waste of flower and leaf and thorn,

Glimmer of mist, ~~first faintness of the dawn~~ laughter of light re-born

Beyond the long line where the great seas are,

A stir and scent of life, a gleaming star

Set in the blue and lingering forlorn

Above the red up-surging of the morn,

~~Tell of~~ Forerun the ~~daybreak~~ dDaybreak ~~on the hills afar~~ in ~~its~~ his flaming car.

And in my heart an impulse strange and new

Of something sacred to the touch of wrong,

A roseate flush of being, and a strong

Sweet sense of thoughts made nobler and more true,

Herald Love's dawn-light and a day of song –

Lo, a Star also in my world of blue.

Jan 11:87

Pub. Eng. Illustrated for Nov. 1888.[35]

Finished Jan 15: Sakía-muni (Newdigate for 1887)[36]

34 "Early in the Morning," a phrase in Virgil's *Georgics*.

35 *The English Illustrated Magazine*, V: 62 (November 1888), 133. A clipping is pasted to the back cover.

36 See the Introduction and Appendix C.

Sub Lucem

Low music from the birds that ~~charms~~ steals afar
Over a waste of flower and leaf and thorn,
Glimmer of mist, ~~flash~~ laughter of light re-born
~~fairness of the dawn~~
Beyond the long line where the great seas are,
A stir and scent of life, a gleaming star
Set in the blue and lingering forlorn
Above the red up-surging of the morn,
~~Forerun~~ in ~~its~~ his
~~Telt of~~ the Daybreak ~~on the hills afar~~ flaming car.

And in my heart an impulse strange and new
Of something sacred to the touch of wrong,
A roseate flush of being, and a strong
Sweet sense of thoughts made nobler and more true,
Herald Love's dawn-light and a day of song.—
Lo, a Star also in my world of blue.

Pub. in Eng. Illustrated for Nov. 1888. Jan.

Finished Jan 15: Sakya-muni (Newdigate for 1887)

Quietude

Light of the gloaming on the ivied spire
That mounts amid the blueness overhead:
Light on the painted oriels gleaming red
Against the slant sun's radiance of fire.

Peace in the yew-tree's shadow, broad and dim,
Where no sound mars the sacred even-time:
Only a sleepy murmur in the lime,
Only a clear-voiced thrush's vesper-hymn.

Apart from all, a woman's fresh-made tomb:
Three golden lines that glimmer to the light:
Wreathèd narcissus and a cross of white:
A lone black figure standing in the gloom.

Jan – 87.

Quietude

Light of the gloaming on the irised spire
That mounts amid the blueness overhead:
Light on the painted vista gleaming red
Against the slant sun's radiance of fire.

Peace in the yew-tree's shadow, broad and dim,
Where no sound mars the sacred even-time:
Only a sleepy murmur in the lime,
Only a clear-voiced thrush's vesper-hymn.

Apart from all, a woman's fresh-made tomb:
Three golden lilies that glimmer to the light:
Wreathèd narcissus and a cross of white:
A lone black figure standing in the gloom.

Jan. 87.

Enough.

I

Enough for me
To read, writ on the summer sky
And largely on the summer land,
That God is Love: to understand
Thus much of Life's weird mystery.

II

Enough for me
To watch amid the gloom and know
That, though our ways ~~are~~ be dark and dim,
The patient stars are lit by Him,
And that His will would have it so.

III

Enough for me
To wait and labour patiently
Until the morn breaks on the night
With a day-dawning, infinite
Of limitless ŧLove. Enough for me.

Jan 23: 87.

Enough.

I

Enough for me
To read, writ on the summer sky
And largely on the summer land,
That God is Love: to understand
Thus much of life's weird mystery.

II

Enough for me
To watch amid the gloom and hours
That, though our ways ~~are~~ be dark and dim,
The patient stars are lit by Him,
And that His will would have it so.

III

Enough for me
To wait and labour patiently
Until the morn breaks on the night
With a day-dawning infinite
Of limitless Love. Enough for me.

Jan

Insperatus Amor[37]

I

In wood and field and fen,
In mountain and in city everywhere
I wandered among men,
And sought a rosebud for myself to wear:

II

When, glancing by the way,
Instead of a red rose I found a lone
White iris-bloom that lay
Drooping across my path: ‘tis now my own.

----◇----

Jan 26:87

37 “Unanticipated love.”

Inoperatus Amor

I

In wood and field and fen,
In mountain and in city everywhere
I wandered among men,
And sought a rosebud for myself to wear:

II

When, glancing by the way,
Instead of a red rose I found a lone
White iris-bloom that lay
Drooping across my path: 'tis now my own.

Jan 26: 87.

Reconciliation

I

We lingered in the rich twilight,
Watching the great sea-waves that rolled
Their level drifts of foam and gold
High up the shore: for yesternight
Had raged with storm, and all the sea
Was one bright surge of revelry.

II

And had we quarrelled? Nay, a word
Spoken in haste had crossed our lips,
While, just apart, we watched the ships
Pass, white-winged, with the white sea-bird;
I wondered, in that last sunshine,
Whether the fault was hers or mine.

III

So we sat there beside the sea,
And clasped our hands, and watched until
The noisy waves grew hushed and still,
And calm was on the wind: and we
Were calm too, and a wide peace lay
Along the purple line of day.

June/87

----◇----

Pub. in “Home Chimes”, Apr. 1888.[38]

38 V: 181.

Reconciliation

I

We lingered in the rich twilight,
Watching the great sea-waves that rolled
Their level drifts of foam and gold
High up the shore: for yesternight
Had raged with storm, and all the sea
Was one bright surge of nearby.

II

And had we quarrelled? Nay, a word
Spoken in haste had crossed our lips,
While, just apart, we watched the ships
Pass, white-winged, with the white sea-bird;
I wondered, in that last sunshine,
Whether the fault was hers or mine.

III

So we sat there beside the sea,
And clasped our hands, and watched until
The noisy waves grew hushed and still,
And calm was on the wind: and we
Were calm too, and a wide peace lay
Along the purple line of day.

June/87

Pub. in 'Home Chimes', Apr. 1888

Down from the Mount

I

O thou snow-mantled summit, coldly still,
What didst thou see that night, in purple gloom,
When dusk stole lingeringly from hill to hill,
And deeper than the silence of the tomb
Was that calm depth of silence where the day
Faltered along the blue marge far away?

II

What didst thou see? Three forms unearthly bright,
Talking and pacing there, with grave glad eyes;
And One on Whose face shone a solemn light
Brighter than daybreak when June tints the skies:
But, lo, on His pure brows – no kingly gem –
The shadow of a sharp thorn-diadem!

III

Then, as the stars passed over, a great throng
Gathered with wailing in that lonely place,
And with the dawn One came to right their wrong,
He and the Dawn together: and His face
Was radiant with unfading memories
Of that dear splendour and a Father's peace.

Down from the Mount

I

O thou snow-mantled summit, coldly still,
What didst thou see, that night, in purple gloom,
When dusk stole lingeringly from hill to hill,
And deeper than the silence of the tomb
Was that calm depth of silence where the day
Faltered along the blue marge far away?

II

What didst thou see? Three forms unearthly bright,
Talking and pacing there, with grave glad eyes;
And One on Whose face shone a solemn light
Brighter than daybreak when June tints the skies:
But, lo, on His pure brows – no Kingly gem –
The shadow of a sharp thorn-diadem!

III

Then, as the stars passed over, a great throng
Gathered with wailing in that lonely place,
And with the dawn One came to right their wrong,
He and the Dawn together: and His face
Was radiant with unfading memories
Of that dear splendour and a Father's grace.

IIII

O thou sun-burnished summit, calm with snow,
What is thy message unto us who yearn? –
‘Be strong of soul and patient; mount and know
Your Christ transfigured; then descend to learn
More rightly, as you treads life’s lowly way,
The small grand duties of the common day’.

June: 1887

----◇----

IIII

O thou sun-burnished summit, calm with snow,
What is thy message unto us who yearn?—
'Be strong of soul and patient; mount and Know
Your Christ transfigured; then descend to learn
More rightly, as you tread life's lowly ways,
The small grand duties of the common day'.

June: 1887

Not Comfortless

I

No tract [path] of life so bare
But that, with patient care,
Some sunny flower will break in blossom there.

II

No sorrow-gloom so deep
But that a star will peep
Between the clouds, and teach us not to weep.

III

No mist of doubt so high
But that we may descry
The smile of strong-winged angels sweeping by.

IV

O flower and star and smile,
This weary hour beguile:
We shall not need you in a little while.

July: 87

Not Comfortless

I

No tract (path) of life so bare
But that, with patient care,
Some sunny flower will break in blossom there.

II

No sorrow-gloom so deep
But that a star will peep
Between the clouds, and teach us not to weep.

III

No mist of doubt so high
But that we may descry
The smile of strong-winged angels sweeping by.

IV

O flower and star and smile,
This weary hour beguile:
We shall not need you in a little while.

July. 87

Must Be

Only an hour, where the cowslips blow,
To kiss and say farewell,
While the sun sinks down and the fiery glow
Fades, dreamlike, from the dell;
And the far-off Sabbath chime is low
And sad as a dead man's knell.

Only one kiss in the warm blue night,
Like sunlight on the sea,
Ere we shall part to left and right
And face the stern 'must be';
And then the cold mist's barren blight
Steals in 'twixt you and me.

And then the long, long hours of pain,
Cheerless and blank and slow,
And the yearning dreams that come in vain
Of the golden long-ago:
Until at last we meet again
And kiss where the cowslips blow.

July 8:87

Must Be

Only an hour, where the cowslips blow,
To kiss and say farewell,
While the sun sinks down and the fiery glow
Fades, dreamlike, from the dell;
And the far-off Sabbath chime is low
And sad as a dead man's knell.

Only one kiss in the warm blue night,
Like sunlight on the sea,
Ere we shall part to left and right
And face the stern 'must be';
And then the cold mist's barren blight
Steals in 'twixt you and me.

And then the long, long hours of pain,
Cheerless and blank and slow,
And the yearning dreams that come in vain
Of the golden long-ago:
Until at last we meet again
And kiss where the cowslips blow.

July 8

A Child's Thought

He asked me, while we walked last night,
That dreamy six-years' child,
'Why did this lovely flower grow?
Was it because God smiled?'
And, as I watched with wonder
His frank deep eyes of blue,
I could not answer aught but 'Yes',
And felt that it was true.

For when God paints a picture
Upon the sunset skies,
Or bids an April blossom bud
Or grand sea-waves arise,
Always He sends some lesson
To teach us how to be
As pure and true and beautiful
As are the things we see.

And, would we learn the lesson
Of all fair things that are,
The meaning of the summer morn,

A Child's Thought

He asked me, while we walked last night,
That dreamy six-years' child,
'Why did this lovely flower grow?
Was it because God smiled?
And, as I watched with wonder
His frank deep eyes of blue,
I could not answer aught but 'Yes',
And felt that it was true.

For when God paints a picture
Upon the sunset skies,
Or bids an April blossom bud
Or grand sea-waves arise,
Always He sends some lesson
To teach us how to be
As pure and true and beautiful
As are the things we see.

And, would we learn the lesson
Of all fair things that are,
The meaning of the summer morn,

The secret of the star,
We must keep fresh within us
The innocence of birth; :
None but the child-heart knows the way
Into that heaven on earth

----◇----

July 8:87

Sailing

I

O breath of the sparkling sea!
O sweet breath of the sunlit sea!
Hast thou a word, a voice for me?

Tell me – I wait and dream –
Where do the white sails gleam
That waft her along thy stream?

II

O blast of the booming sea!
O wild blast of the cruel sea!
Hast thou a word, a voice, for me?

Tell me – I wait and weep –
Down in the still blue deep
Where does she lies [sic], asleep?

Aug. 87.

Pub. in 'Home Chimes'–[39]

39 The note is in pencil; the poem appeared in VI (1889), 56.

The secret of the star,
We must keep fresh within us
The innocence of birth:
None but the child-heart knows the way
Into that heaven on earth

July 8: 87

Sailing

I

O breath of the sparkling sea!
O sweet breath of the sunlit sea!
Hast thou a word, a voice for me?

Tell me – I wait and dream –
Where do the white sails gleam
That waft her along thy stream?

II

O blast of the booming sea!
O wild blast of the cruel sea!
Hast thou a word, a voice, for me?

Tell me – I wait and weep –
Down in the still blue deep
Where does she lie, asleep?

Aug

Pub. in "Home Chimes"

Two Worlds are His

I

She is his worlds – a second world, more true,
More beautiful and true, than that we see
Wearing for aye with tone and shape and hue
Its mystic veil of changeful imagery.

II

Beneath her gentle brow, grey loving eyes
Look out like twin lakes in a mountain-wood,
Where, ‘neath a canopy of stainless skies,
The land lies consecrate to solitude.

III

Her nest is witchery; but when she moves
He feels his pulse beat faster: her dear smile
Has music’s subtle meaning, and he loves
No charm so well as her sweet maiden-guile.

IV

In tiny storm of curls about her head
Clusters the dark-brown wonder of her hair:
Spring’s magic breathes where’er her footsteps tread,
And beauty is around her everywhere.

V

She is his other world: while she is his,
A heaven is open where he dwells alone;
And, though he loves her for all else she is,
He loves her most because she is his own

----◇---- July/87

Pub. in “Home Chimes” for Jan: 1888 [IV, 454]

Two Worlds are His

I

She is his world – a second world, more true,
More beautiful and true, than that we see
Wearing for age with tone and shape and hue
Its mystic veil of changeful imagery.

II

Beneath her gentle brow, grey loving eyes
Look out like twin lakes in a mountain-wood,
Where, 'neath a canopy of stainless skies,
The land lies consecrate to solitude.

III

Her rest is witchery; but when she moves
He feels his pulse beat faster: her dear smile
Has music's subtle meaning, and he loves
No charm so well as her sweet maiden-guile.

IV

In tiny storm of curls about her head
Clusters the dark-brown wonder of her hair:
Spring's magic breathes where'er her footsteps tread,
And beauty is around her everywhere.

V

She is his other world: while she is his,
A heaven is open where he dwells alone;
And, though he loves her for all else she is,
He loves her most because she is his own

July/87.

Pub. in "Home Chimes" for Jan: 1888

To October

We will not weep for thee. Thou com’st sad-eyed,
With tear-drops sparkling down thy faded cheek,
As if thou mournest: yet the mountain-peak
Has glory which might well be summer’s pride
In her own sunset; all the country-side
Flames with new beauty, and new voices speak,
In tones more chaste than summer’s and more meek,
Of a glad peace that lingers far and wide.
Look back into the unforgotten spring
And summer well-remembered; look before
Into the unawakened days that bring
The joys of winter: and be sad no more.
Thou hast the year’s whole wealth – Why weep for thee,
Sweet prophet and sweet nurse of memory?

----◇---- 13 Aug: 87.

To October

We will not weep for thee. Thou comst sad-eyed,
With tear-drops sparkling down thy faded cheek,
As if thou mournest: yet the mountain-peak
Has glory which might well be Summer's pride
In her own Sunset; all the Country-side
Flames with new beauty, and new voices speak,
In tones more chaste than summer's and more meek,
Of a glad peace that lingers far and wide.
Look back into the unforgotten spring
And Summer well-remembered; look before
Into the unawakened days that bring
The joys of winter: and be sad no more.
Thou hast the years whole wealth – Why weep for thee,
Sweet prophet and sweet nurse of memory?

13 Aug:

After Rain

Dark storms of rain have passed away,
Leaving the blue skies bare, and lo!
Above the ~~twilight~~ odorous fields of May
Red sunset-arches glow.

The hawthorn-boughs are wet with drops
That flash and sparkle, each a star;
Bird-music chimes in every copse,
Re-echoed from afar.

On wings with summer fancies fraught
The blue- black swallow sweeping by,
Cuts, like an unexpected thought,
The silence of the sky.

I hear the laughter of a child
Down where the meadow-banks are all
Fretted with shifting lights and wild,
And ~~broad green~~ dreamy shadows fall.

After Rain

Dark storms of rain have passed away,
leaving the blue skies bare, and lo!
Above the ~~twilight~~ odorous fields of May
Red sunset-arches glow.

The hawthorn-boughs are wet with drops
That flash and sparkle, each a star;
Bird-music chimes in every copse,
Re-echoed from afar.

On wings with summer fancies fraught
The blue-black swallow sweeping by,
Cuts, like an unexpected thought,
The silence of the sky.

I hear the laughter of a child
Down where the meadow-banks are all
Fretted with shifting lights and wild,
And ~~broad green~~ dreamy shadows fall.

I see two passing, where I stand;

I catch the sweet soft undertone;

But they are walking hand in hand,

~~While~~ And I am here alone.

----◇---- 17 Aug: 87

Pub. in 'Macmillan's Magazine', for Oct 1888[40]

40 *The English Illustrated Magazine*, October 1888, p. 466, signed "S. A. A." It also appeared in *Littell's Living Age*, November 17, 1888, p. 368. Alexander has added the date above, "Oct 1888," in pencil. On this page too are several cancelled words blotted from another sheet and therefore inverted. The words appear to include "~~teaches~~ [or ~~touches~~] ~~with p…~~" and "[~~illeg.~~] ~~pain~~." If these were part of a draft of a poem, the poem is not included in this notebook.

I see two passing, where I stand;
I catch the sweet soft undertone;
But they are walking hand in hand,
~~While~~ And I am here alone.

17 Aug: 87

Pub. in 'Macmillan's Magazine', for Oct 1884

Memories

Pub. in Eng. Illustrated Aug. 1888.[41]

I

Do you remember how the sunset sky
Blazed red and gold
When we were parting; how, at our ‘good-bye’,
Black thunder-clouds that rolled

Angrily round, were touched with purple passion –
Like that sharp pain
Which seemed to seize our hearts and in them fashion
A storm of fire and rain;

And how the thrush upon the bending twig
Was mute with fears;
And future things loomed terrible and big
Through blinding haze of tears?

II

Do you remember, when we met again,
How all the Dawn
Was thrilled with light that flooded hill and plain,
And crept from lawn to lawn;

41 *The English Illustrated Magazine*, August 1888, p. [762], where it is accompanied by a header illustration by Henry Ryland (1856-1924). “Memories” also appeared in *Littell’s Living Age*, September 22, 1888, p. 706. Alexander’s note on the publication is in pencil. A review of “The August Magazines” in *The Leeds Mercury* (July 28, 1888) singled out “Memories” as “tuneful and pathetic.”

Memories

publ. in Boy's Illustrated Aug. 1888

I

Do you remember how the sunset sky
Blazed red and gold
When we were parting; how, at our 'good-bye',
Black thunder-clouds that rolled

Angrily round, were touched with purple passion—
Like that sharp pain
Which seemed to seize our hearts and in them fashion
A storm of fire and rain;

And how the thrush upon the bending twig
Was mute with fears;
And future things loomed terrible and big
Through blinding haze of tears?

II

Do you remember, when we met again,
How all the Dawn
Was thrilled with light that flooded hill and plain,
And crept from lawn to lawn;

When the glad skylark on his buoyant wing,
Wet from the dew,
Soared up and up, and could not choose but sing
Within a sky so blue

That June herself seemed moved with our own gladness,
And everywhere
Earth's beauty mingled with the sweet half-sadness
That comes from things most fair?

III

Do you remember? Ah! those memories
Of days long dead –
How can they die? Blent with the breath of seas,
Dawn's blue and Evening's red,

With light and music, magic scent of flowers,
And wingds at play,
With fragrance of the dew, and summer showers,
With moon-beam and sun-ray,

With meetings and with partings, hopes and fears,
And all that gives
Life's interchange of laughter and of tears –
How die, while Love still lives?

23 Aug 87

When the glad skylark on his buoyant wing,
Wet from the dew,
Soared up and up, and could not choose but sing
Within a sky so blue

That June herself seemed moved with our own gladness
And everywhere
Earth's beauty mingled with the sweet half-sadness
That comes from things most fair?

III

Do you remember? Ah! those memories
Of days long dead—
How can they die? Blent with the breath of seas,
Dawn's blue and Evening's red,

With light and music, magic scent of flowers,
And wings at play,
With fragrance of the dew, and summer showers,
With moon-beam and Sun-ray,

With meetings and with partings, hopes and fears,
And all that gives
Life's interchange of laughter and of tears—
How die, while Love still lives?

At Moonrise

How hushed and quiet the gaunt poplars spring
Beside the lake,
Where the song-weary thrush; head under wing,
Is nestling half-awake!

The warm grey lights of evening linger there
Or gently pass
Along the dappled water, and the air
No voice nor music has.

Low on the night's marge yonder, a big moon,
Clearing the blue,
Comes up and silvers the broad shades which soon
The bats flit darkly through.

And visions, born of fancy and the night,
Glide to and fro,
Mote with dream-feet amid the solemn light,
And softly come and go.

At Moonrise

How hushed and quiet the gaunt poplars spring
Beside the lake,
Where the song-weary thrush, head under wing,
Is nestling half-awake!

The warm grey lights of evening linger there
Or gently pass
Along the dappled water, and the air
No voice nor music has.

Low on the night's marge yonder, a big moon,
Clearing the blue,
Comes up and silvers the broad shades which soon
The bats flit darkly through.

And visions, born of fancy and the night,
Glide to and fro,
Mote with dream-feet amid the solemn light,
And softly come and go.

Across the moor – else silent over earth

And sky's wide range –

Steals the low laughter of two lovers' mirth:

How sweet it sounds, yet strange!

1 Sep: 87.

Pub. in "English Illustrated Mag." Xmas Number, Dec. 1887.[42]

42 *The English Illustrated Magazine*, December 1887, p. 244. "At Moonrise" was also printed in *Littell's Living Age*, January 7, 1888, p. 2; *The Golden Argosy*, February 25, 1888, p. 202; and the *Milwaukee Daily Journal*, May 31, 1888. Tipped into the notebook between pp. 162 and 163 is a clipping of the *English Illustrated Magazine* printing of "At Moonrise."

Across the moor – else silent over earth
And sky's wide range –
Steals the low laughter of two lovers' mirth:
How sweet it sounds, yet strange!

1 Sep

Pub. in "English Illustrated Mag." Xmas Number, Dec. 1887.

By the Sea

Night and the desolate reaches of the sea
    Were with me, like a vision: nothing more.
    I wandered down beside the windy shore,
And watched the white surf hissing, strong and free,
Against the rocks, until the soul in me,
    Thrilled by the ever-multitudinous roar
    Of wind and wave, grew vaster than before,
Lost in wide ocean's spirit-mystery.
Quiet I stood there, though the thunder came
    In godlike anger, and great waves were hurled
Up at my feet, and fast the forked red flame
Of passionate lightning cut the starless sky:
    Only I felt, in that unpeopled world,
That we two were alone, the Sea and I.

----◇---- 8 Sep: 87

By the Sea

Night and the desolate reaches of the Sea
Were with me, like a vision: nothing more.
I wandered down beside the windy shore,
And watched the white surf hissing, strong and free,
Against the rocks, until the soul in me,
Thrilled by the ever-multitudinous roar
Of wind and wave, grew vaster than before,
Lost in wide ocean's spirit-mystery.
Quiet I stood there, though the thunder came
In godlike anger, and great waves were hurled
Up at my feet, and fast the forked red flame
Of passionate lightning cut the starless sky:
Only I felt, in that unpeopled world,
That we two were alone, the Sea and I.

8th Sept: 87

Unspoken

Sometimes a passionate yearning in our breast
Burns like a flame, and up thro' widening rings
    Soars as the skylark: yet the skylark sings,
And we are voiceless, knowing not how blest.
Hope, Faith and Fear mingle in vague unrest;
    And grand veiled visitants on spirit-wings
    Come to us from a land of shadowy things,
Like grey clouds trooping from ~~the~~ a golden West.
There, up amid that strangely glorious sky,
    Solemn, wild, limitless, with no man near
[~~Hleg.~~] To catch the unworded murmurs of our breath,
We feel that we must speak – must speak or die.
    Once past the dark gates of constraining Death,
    Shall we not tell it out, with God to hear?

----◇---- 9 Sep: 87

Unspoken

Sometimes a passionate yearning in our breast
Burns like a flame, and up thro' widening rings
Soars as the skylark: yet the skylark sings,
And we are voiceless, knowing not how blest.
Hope, Faith and Fear mingle in vague unrest;
And grand veiled visitants on spirit-wings
Come to us from a land of shadowy things,
Like grey clouds trooping from a golden West.
There, up amid that strangely glorious sky,
Solemn, wild, limitless, with no man near
To catch the unworded murmurs of our breath,
We feel that we must speak – must speak or die.
Once past the dark gates of constraining Death,
Shall we not tell it out, with God to hear?

9 Sep

Sorrow

When Sorrow comes to one forlorn
Of love and light, about her head –
Bare, pensive, bowed, ungarlanded –
Is wreathed no chaplet save of thorn.

And in her trembling hand she brings
No ruddy wine that soothes and cheers:
Only the chalice of cold tears
And shadowy imaginings.

Yet, as she goes, she leaves behind
White flowers of amaranth that bloom
Fragrantly through the darkened room,
And breathe a freshness on the wind:

That efall from clouds of bitter strife
A pure ~~soul's~~ star's bright and perfect whole,
Filling the chambers of the soul
With odours of a sweeter life.

Sorrow

When Sorrow comes to one forlorn
Of love and light, about her head -
Bare, pensive, bowed, ungarlanded -
Is wreathed no chaplet save of thorn.

And in her trembling hand she brings
No ruddy wine that soothes and cheers:
Only the chalice of cold tears
And shadowy imaginings.

Yet, as she goes, she leaves behind
White flowers of amaranth that bloom
Fragrantly through the darkened room,
And breathe a freshness on the wind:

That fall from clouds of bitter strife
A pure ~~south~~ star's bright and perfect whole,
Filling the chambers of the soul
With odours of a sweeter life.

So wake us into larger day,

O Sorrow, from our empty dream,

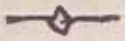
And set us by the immortal stream

Where thy white amaranth ~~bl~~ shines alway!

----◇----

9 Sep: 87

So wake us into larger day,
O Sorrow, from our empty dream,
And set us by the immortal stream
Where thy white amaranth ~~tt~~ shines always!



9 Sep: 87

~~Today and Tomorrow~~

Resignation

I

My ways are dim: a dusky light is burning
Over the shadows of the silent hills.
Breaketh the day, or is the dark returning? –
All shall be as God wills.

II

Yes, all shall be as Thou wilt, O my Father!
The night has no abiding-place with Thee:
Through dark and light not what I will, but rather
Do Thou Thy will in me.

III

I must not linger here to sigh or sorrow:
Above the blackest gloom of Life, I know,
Will dawn the sweet hope of a bright tomorrow;
And where Thou art I go.

IV

My ways are dim: a dusky light is burning
Over the shadows of the silent hills.
Breaketh the day, or is the dark returning? –
All shall be as God wills.

----◇----

7 Sep: 87

~~Today and Tomorrow~~
Resignation

I

My ways are dim: a dusky light is burning
Over the shadows of the silent hills.
Breaketh the day, or is the dark returning?—
All shall be as God wills.

II

Yes, all shall be as Thou wilt, O my Father!
The night has no abiding-place with Thee:
Through dark and light not what I will, but rather
Do Thou Thy will in me.

III

I must not linger here to sigh or sorrow:
Above the blackest gloom of Life, I know,
Will dawn the sweet hope of a bright tomorrow;
And where Thou art ~~as~~ I go.

IV

My ways are dim: a dusky light is burning
Over the shadows of the silent hills.
Breaketh the day, or is the dark returning?—
All shall be as God wills.

7 Sep: 87

May Music

I

Soft as sea-echoes answering
Far music when the night is still,
The voices of the virgin Spring
Steal round the woodland and the hill.

II

Over the fields, star-eyed with flowers,
The skylark soars against the light:
The cuckoo tells the slow-paced hours
That troop through gloaming into night.

III

Children who rob the tawny Earth
Of her first, darling, frail primrose,
Mingle the laughter of their mirth
With all the songs that Nature knows.

IV

Even the ripple of the rain
Brings sweetness from the flaming West,
Waking, along the lonely lane,
The shy anemone from rest.

V

So, as the months glide down the year
And dance on fairy feet away,
No voices soothe the troubled ear
More sweetly than the songs of May.

----◇----

Dec. 1887

May Music

I

Soft as sea-echoes answering
Far music when the night is still,
The voices of the virgin Spring
Steal round the woodland and the hill.

II

Over the fields, star-eyed with flowers,
The skylark soars against the light:
The cuckoo tells the slow-paced hours
That troop through gloaming into night.

III

Children who rob the tawny Earth
Of her first, darling, frail primrose,
Mingle the laughter of their mirth
With all the songs that Nature knows.

IV

Even the ripple of the rain
Brings sweetness from the flaming West,
Waking, along the lonely lane,
The shy anemone from rest.

V

So, as the months glide down the year
And dance on fairy feet away,
No voices soothe the troubled ear
More sweetly than the songs of May.

Dec. 186

Lorelei

(after Heine)

I

What is it? Why am I so sad?
I know not why.
My mind is turning o'er and o'er
A tale of days gone by.

II

The cool peace of the gloaming rests
On Rhine's swift stream:
The mountain-peaks are all aglow
With Evening's last sunbeam.

III

A lovely Maid – O wondrous sight! –
Is sitting there;
I see the glitter of her gems;
She combs her golden hair

IV

She combs it with a comb of gold,
And still sings she:
It is a weird, weird song she sings –
A magic melody.

V

The boatman in his little boat
Is thrilled with grief;
His eyes are ever fixed above,
Nor see the rocky reef.

Lorelei
(after Heine)

I

What is it? Why am I so sad?
I know not why.
My mind is turning o'er and o'er
A tale of days gone by.

II

The cool grace of the gloaming rests
On Rhine's swift stream:
The mountain-peaks are all aglow
With Evening's last sunbeam.

III

A lovely Maid – O wondrous sight! –
Is sitting there;
I see the glitter of her gems;
She combs her golden hair

IV

She combs it with a comb of gold,
And still sings she:
It is a weird, weird song she sings –
A magic melody.

V

The boatman in his little boat
Is thrilled with grief;
His eyes are ever fixed above,
Nor see the rocky reef.

He sinks, it seemeth me, at last
The waves among: –
Such is the work of Lorelei
And of the song she sung. [43]

Dec 1887.

----◇----

In the Violet-time

I

The blackthorn-buds are breaking where, but now,
Gaunt yew-trees caught the bitter rime,
And where upon the uplands soon will bow
Green glories of the Summer's prime.

43 A translation of "Die Loreli" (1822) by Heinrich Heine (1799-186).

He sinks, it seemeth me, at last
The waves among:—
Such is the work of Lorelei
And of the song she sung.

Dec 1887

In the Violet-time

I

The blackthorn-buds are breaking where, but now,
Gaunt elm-trees caught the bitter rime,
And where upon the uplands sorry will bow
Queen glories of the Summer's prime.

II

Linked half with Summer, half with Winter's snows,
Spring trips in laughter thro' the land~~,~~:
Snowdrops of March and glad June's budding rose
Blend with the violets in her hand.

III

The dying snowdrop tells of Winter dead
And rough winds that are lulled asleep;
Within the rosebud's slowly darkening red
Young Summer's hope lies hidden deep.

IV

Between them both Spring intertwines her hair
With her own violets, white and blue –
Standing like those sweet music-notes that bear
A memory and a promise too.

V

Thus may for us life's seasons, more and ~~ever~~ more,
Each unto each be knit alway,
And the bright After and the bright Before
Meet in a yet more bright Today.

----◇---- Dec 1887

Pub. in 'Atalanta'.[44]

44 2:7(April 1889), 483. *Atalanta*, ed. by L. T. Meade (Elizabeth Thomasina Meade Smith [1854-1914]) and a popular magazine for girls, was published by Hatchards' from October 1887.

II

Linked half with Summer, half with Winter's snows,
Spring trips in laughter thro' the land:
Snowdrops of March and glad June's budding rose
Blend with the violets in her hand.

III

The dying snowdrop tells of Winter dead
And rough winds that are lulled asleep;
Within the rosebud's slowly-darkening red
Young Summer's hope lies hidden deep.

IV

Between them both Spring intertwines her hair
With her own wreath, white and blue—
Standing, like those sweet music-notes that bear
A minim and a promise too.

V

Thus may for us Life's seasons, more and more,
Each unto each be knit always,
And the bright After and the bright Before
Meet in a yet more bright Today.

Dec 1887

Pub. in 'Atalanta'.

Pine-wood Glooms

–

We found by chance a thicket of tall pines
Deep in a dale
That caught the Spring, and ran in sunny lines
Between the hill and vale.

–

Desolate, old, unblossoming it lay –
A thing apart:
Like some great sorrow hidden deep away
In a sweet innocent heart.

–

For all without was sunshine, and the song
Of thrush and wren,
And breakings-out of dewy buds along
The green-gold of the glen.

–

But in its silent depths was not a sound,
Nor any light:
Only a stillness, awful and profound,
And a weird gloom of night.

–

There, too, beneath a ~~gl~~ gnarled root, strange to tell,
Grew all bereaven
A single primrose: one white sunbeam fell
Beside it out of heaven.

----◇----

Jan: 1888

Quiver [in pencil; if published, untraced. TLM.]

Pine-wood Glooms

We found by chance a thicket of tall pines
Deep in a dale
That caught the Spring, and ran in sunny lines
Between the hill and vale.
Desolate, old, unblossoming it lay—
A thing apart:
Like some great sorrow hidden deep away
In a sweet innocent heart.
For all without was sunshine, and the song
Of thrush and wren,
And breakings-out of dewy buds along
The green-gold of the glen.
But in its silent depths was not a sound,
Nor any light:
Only a stillness, awful and profound,
And a weird gloom of night.
There, too, beneath a gnarled root, strange to tell,
Grew all bereaven
A single primrose: one white sunbeam fell
Beside it out of heaven.

Jan: 1882

Quiver

Love in the Roses

(After Anacreon[45])

I

Heedless Love among the roses
Woke one day a sleeping bee;
Then it stung him in the finger,
And he sobbed full bitterly.

II

Ran he then to fair Cythera:
'Mother!' he began to cry,
As he flung his arms about her,
'I am killed, and I shall die.'

III

'As I played among the roses,
I was stung – my finger, see! –
By the little winged serpent
Called by countryfolk a bee.'

IV

'Ah!' his mother said in answer,
'If the bee's sting hurt thee so,
How much are they hurt, dost think, Love,
Whom thine arrow has brought low?'

----◇----

Jan, 1888

45 A translation from Anacreon (554-469 B.C.). Thomas Moore's "Cupid and the Bee" is perhaps the most famous translation.

Love in the Roses

(After Anacreon)

I

Heedless Love, among the roses
Woke one day a sleeping bee;
Then it stung him in the finger,
And he sobbed full bitterly.

II

Ran he then to fair Cythera:
"Mother!" he began to cry,
As he flung his arms about her,
"I am killed, and I shall die!"

III

"As I played among the roses,
I was stung – my finger, see!–
By the little winged serpent
Called by country folk a bee."

IV

"Ah!" his mother said in answer,
"If the bee's sting hurt thee so,
How much more they hurt, dost think, dove,
Whom thine arrow has brought low?"

Jan, 1886

It must be Spring

I

It must be Spring. Deep in the woods I see
The pure pale primrose light the wakened dells,
And, mingled with the shy anemone,
Blue mists of drooping bells.

II

It must be Spring. The lark leaps up the skies,
Half mad with joy, and sings against the cloud;
I hear the merry laugh of children rise
Brokenly, low and loud.

III

It must be Spring. I feel the evening breeze,
Moist with the sweetness of new-fallen rain,
Blow from the crimson sunset through the trees;
And sink to rest again.

It must be Spring

I

It must be Spring. Deep in the woods I see
The pure pale primrose light the wakened dells,
And, mingled with the shy anemone,
Blue mists of drooping bells.

II

It must be Spring. The lark leaps up the skies,
Half mad with joy, and sings against the cloud;
I hear the merry laugh of children rise
Brotherly, low and loud.

III

It must be Spring. I feel the evening breeze,
Moist with the sweetness of new-fallen rain,
Blow from the crimson sunset through the trees,
And sink to rest again.

IV

It must be Spring. And yet why steals along
Down all the ways of Earth, in cadence slow,
The wordless, murmured, mystic undersong
Which tells of human woe?

V

Why is it that we ever seem to hear
That music, never hushed since Time began? –
Earth has her Spring with each returning year:
Is there no Spring for Man?

----◇---- Apr. 1888.

IV.

It must be Spring. And yet why steals along
Down all the ways of Earth, in cadence slow,
The wordless, murmured, mystic undersong
Which tells of human woe?

V.

Why is it that we ever seem to hear
That music, never hushed since Time began?—
Earth has her Spring with each returning year:
Is there no Spring for Man?

Apr. 1888.

It must be Summer

Down in the dell where the brambles grow
And the lilies are all afire with ~~the~~ [a] glow
    Of the crimson sun on the waters cool,
You may hear the buzz of the weary bee
As it flies to its home in the hollow tree,
    And the leap of the trout in the sombre pool.

The wild trout leaps, and the still deep pond
Breaks with the flash of a diamond
    About the large-leaved lilies there;
And the rippling wave and the hum of the bee
Blend in a murmured melody:
    "It must be Summer: the world's so fair."

----◇---- Ap. 88

Published in Cassell's Mag. 1889[46]

46 The title and date are in pencil. The poem appeared, illustrated, in the August 1889 issue, p. 532.

It must be Summer

Down in the dell where the brambles grow
And the lilies are all aflre with ~~the~~ a glow
Of the crimson sun on the waters cool,
You may hear the buzz of the weary bee
As it flies to its home in the hollow tree,
And the leap of the trout in the sombre pool.

The wild trout leaps, and the still deep pond
Breaks with the flash of a diamond
About the large-leaved lilies there;
And the rippling wave and the hum of the bee
Blend in a murmured melody:
"It must be Summer: the world so fair."

Ap-88

Published in Cassell's Mag. 1889

Earth's Winters Change

I

Earth's winters change. Spring sweeps her silver lyre
And sings a new life into wood and hill:
Over the fields leaps out a sudden fire
Of pallid primrose and deep daffodil.

II

Earth's winters change: but is there change in Man?
He has his winter too – the deadly strife
With sin and pain and poverty's stern ban,
The blossomless, unloved and loveless life.

III

And for those frail child-florets of the street, –
The wee wan faces to which the sun is strange,
Nipped by the bitter frost that kills the sweet
Fresh dawn of hope – is there for them no change?

IV

Ah, who will touch, for them, the golden string
Whose music is the anthem of new birth?
Who will bring back the sunlight of the Spring,
And lift to Heaven what now is turned to Earth?

Ap. 88

Earth's winters change

I

Earth's winters change. Spring sweeps her silver lyre
And sings a new life into wood and hill:
Over the fields leaps out a sudden fire
Of pallid primrose and deep daffodil.

II

Earth's winters change: but is there change in Man?
He has his winter too – the deathly strife
With sin and pain and poverty's stern ban,
The blossomless, unloved and loveless life.

III

And for those frail child-flowers of the street,–
The wee wan faces to which the sun is strange,
Nipped by the bitter frost that kills the sweet
Fresh dawn of hope – is there for them no change?

IV

Ah, who will touch for them, the golden string
Whose music is the anthem of new birth?
Who will bring back the sunlight of the Spring,
And lift to Heaven what now is turned to Earth?

Life & Pain

Two Angels stood beside me, Life and Pain;
And on the first I dared not look, or if
I threw a timid, side-long glance, he seemed
To turn away, & shroud his lightning face
With a strange glory of half-folded wings:
So that I saw him dimly. But at last,
When we had mused together one sweet hour,
The Angel Pain stretched out his hand & laid
A flame-like finger on my forehead, while
I shrank before him, as on lonely flats
To the cold ripple bows the wind-swept reed.
Then, gazing on me out of dark deep eyes,
He cried, in words that thrilled & then grew soft
With pathos: ‘Only they who have known Pain
Look wisely upon Life or rightly guess
The meaning of his face. On those alone
Whose eyes are blinded with earth’s blurring tears
Breaks from afar the Apocalypse of Heaven.’

June 21: 88

Life & Pain

Two Angels stood beside me, Life and Pain;
And on the first I dared not look, or if
I threw a timid, side-long glance, he seemed
To turn away, & shroud his lightning face
With a strange glory of half-folded wings:
So that I saw him dimly. But at last,
When we had mused together one sweet hour,
The Angel Pain stretched out his hand & laid
A flame-like finger on my forehead, while
I shrank before him, as on lonely flats
To the cold ripple bows the wind-swept reed.
Then, gazing on me out of dark deep eyes,
He cried, in words that thrilled & then grew soft
With pathos: 'Only they who have Known Pain
Look wisely upon life or rightly guess
The meaning of his face. On those alone
Whose eyes are blinded with earth's blearing tears
Breaks from afar the Apocalypse of Heaven.'

June 21: 88

~~An Autumn~~ Winter Sunset

A cold mist, motionless & grey,
Sleeps on the dark moors where the glow
Of the last sunlight of the day
Scarce strikes a sparkle from the snow;
The red sun in the murky west
Sinks to his rest.

The red sun sinks: his ways grow dim.
From earth and heaven, East, South & North
And from the West that welcomed him
No voice or murmur stealeth forth
To break the sombre calm & tell
His last farewell.

Nowhere is any sound or life:
Only at times, far off, you hear
Across the dry & barren ground
Strange crackings from the ice-blue mere;
The moorland like a dead thing lies
Beneath dead skies.

A ~~Autumn~~ Winter Sunset

A cold mist, motionless & grey,
Sleeps on the dark moors where the glow
Of the last sunlight of the day
Scarce strikes a sparkle from the snow;
The red sun in the murky west
Sinks to his rest.

The red sun sinks: his rays grow dim.
From earth and heaven, East, South & North
And from the West that welcomed him
No voice or murmur stealeth forth
To break the sombre calm & hill
His last farewell.

Nowhere is any sound or life:
Only at times, far off, you hear
Across the dry & barren ground
Strange cracklings from the ice-blue mere;
The moorland like a dead thing lies
Beneath dead skies.

Yet even here quick Fancy sees
The hidden germs of patient Spring,
Watches amid the flowerless tree,
The flashings-out of April's wing,
And hears in cadence low & long
≠ An Easter-song!

Sep 1888

Pub. in Cassell's[47]

Song: To the Winds

I

Fling O fling, ye Winds of May,
Fragrance on my primrose bed;
Check the feet of hasty Day
With quiet hints of gold & red.

II

Winds of summer, come & bring
Those dear songs that once I knew;
Keep me wakeful, while you sing
All the night's long wonder through.

III

~~Winds of autumn, weave~~ Weave, ye autumn winds, & throw
Strange grey spells across the plain;
Teach the corn to catch the glow
Mixed of sunset & the rain.

47 In pencil; illustrated in *Cassell's Family Magazine*, 1890, p. 152 (the index lists Alexander as "The Rev."). Included too in Martha Capps Oliver, *Round the Year with the Poets: A Compilation of Nature Poems* (New York: 1900) p. 378.

Yet even here quick Fancy sees
The hidden germs of patient Spring,
Watches amid the flowerless trees
The flashings-out of April's wing,
And hears in cadence low & long
≠ An Easter-song!

Sep 188

Publ in Cornh°

Song: To the Winds

I

Fling O fling, ye Winds of May,
Fragrance on my primrose bed;
Check the fest of hasty Day
With quiet hints of gold red.

II

Winds of summer, come & bring
Those dear songs that once I knew;
Keep me wakeful, while you sing
All the night's long wonder through.

III

~~Winds of autumn,~~ Weave, ~~ye~~ autumn winds, ~~weave~~ & throw
Strange grey spells across the plain;
Teach the corn to catch the glow
Mixed of sunset & the rain.

IV

Winds of winter, sleep O sleep,
Lest you wake a happy past.
Sleep: for, if you cease to weep,
I may also rest at last.

Sep 5/88

Pub. in 'English Illustrated'[48]

Homeless

I

Where the willow-boughs were drooping
Close beside the water's edge,
And the long grey leaves were looping
Dappled shadows o'er the sedge –
There they found her softly lying
In a lily-haunted place,
With the day about her dying,
With the red light on her face.

II

Hither, so they guessed, she wandered –
Work was scarce & wages scant –

48 *The English Illustrated Magazine*, June 1889, p. 687; *Littell's Living Age*, July 20, 1889, p. 130; and the American *Magazine of Poetry and Literary Review*, 2:2 (April 1890), 248.

IV

Winds of winter, sleep O sleep,
Lest you wake a happy past.
Sleep: for, if you cease to weep,
I may also rest at last.

Sep 5/88

Pub in 'English Illustrated'

Homeless

I

Where the willow-boughs were drooping
Close beside the water's edge,
And the long grey leaves were looping
Dappled shadows o'er the sedge –
There they found her softly lying
In a lily-haunted place,
With the day about her dying,
With the red light on her face.

II

Hither, so they guessed, she wandered –
Work was scarce & wages scant –

When her tiny means were squandered,
Sick at heart & weak with want:
And within the swift green river,
Far from all the city's strife,
She had sought, to last for ever,
Quiet for her fevered life.

III

Quiet was indeed the meadow
Sloping to the lilied stream;
Standing there amid the shadow
In the sunset's broken gleam,
They could only hear the quiver
Of the rushes in the breeze,
And the ripple of the river,
And the tossing of the trees

Sep 5/88

When her tiny means were squandered,
Sick at heart & weak with want:
And within the swift green river,
Far from all the city's strife,
She had sought, to last for ever,
Quiet for her fevered life.

III

Quiet was indeed the meadow
Sloping to the lilied stream;
Standing there amid the shadow
In the sunset's broken gleam,
They could only hear the quiver
Of the rushes in the breeze,
And the ripple of the river,
And the tossing of the trees

Sept 5/88

~~Unanswered~~ Love's Oracle

We must not question Love's dark oracle:

And yet sometimes a soul that strives ~~a~~ alone,

Half-solaced by a choice but half its own,

Looks ~~suddenly~~ up where ~~on the black Night's pall,~~ piercing through Night's dusky pall,

Down the long mountain-paths, the lightnings fall

With momentary glory from God's throne,

And sees a great pure soul, before unknown,

Come near, and touch, and help – yet not in all.

'Tis then that, standing by the golden gate

Beneath the strong-winged angels & the shine

Of lifted swords, and catching, all too late,

~~The transient~~ Quick glimpses of ~~a heaven~~ an ^ Eden-life divine,

For ever barred by adamantine Fate,

It asks of Love, with bowed head – 'Why not mine?'

--- Nov 23: 1888

Pub. in English Illustrated[49]

49 In pencil; *The English Illustrated Magazine*, July 1889, p. 757. The poem appeared also in the *Galveston Daily News* (Houston, Texas), August 15, 1889, p.4e.

Love's Oracle
~~Unanswered~~

We must not question Love's dark oracle:
And yet sometimes a soul that strives alone,
Half-solaced by a choice but half its own,
Looks ~~suddenly~~ up where piercing through Night's dusky pall,
~~on the black Night's path,~~
Down the long mountain-paths, the lightnings fall
With momentary glory from God's Throne,
And sees a great pure soul, before unknown,
Come near, and touch, and help – yet not in all.
'Tis then that, standing by the golden gate
Beneath the strong-winged angels & the shine
Of lifted swords, and catching, all too late,
~~The transient~~ Quick glimpses of an Eden-life divine,
For ever barred by adamantine Fate,
It asks of Love, with bowed head – 'Why not mine?'

Nov 23: 1888

Poems Cyclic Monthly

~~Looking Back~~ Retrospect

How strange to stand at last
On Death's lone verge, and, looking back, to see,
Through the grey twilight's growing mystery,
A solemn splendour brood on all the past! –

As at the evening rest
Of some autumnal storm a purple light
Breaks from the ~~falling~~ broken clouds sun and fills the night
With unimagined fires in East and West;

Or as, before we know
The angels near us, light'ning field and street
With the pale light of their departing feet,
They leave a glory in the dark, and go.

Feb 20/89

Retrospect
~~Looking Back~~

How strange to stand at last
On Death's lone verge, and, looking back, ~~to see~~,
Through the grey twilight's growing mystery,
A solemn splendour hood on all the past! —

As at the evening rest
Of some autumnal storm, a purple light
Breaks from the ~~falling~~ broken clouds sun and fills the night
With unimagined fires in East and West;

Or as, before we know
The angels near us, lightening field and street
With the pale light of their departing feet,
They leave a glory in the dark, and go.

Feb 20/89

Stanzas

There is a rest for all we see:
A slumber for the murmuring bee;
A hushed time when the nightingale,
‘Mid the blue silence of the dale,
Can charm the winds into tranquility;

A moment when the waters lie
Quiet beneath a quiet sky,
And every folded flower is still
~~O~~ In brown wood or on mossy hill,
Soothed by a dark-winged moth’s soft lullaby.

And yet of living creatures one
Never knows rest beneath the sun:
He it is who loves in vain;
Who, wandering through a world of pain,
Seeks everywhere for rest and findeth none.

Sep/90

Stanzas

—

There is a rest for all we see:
A slumber for the murmuring bee;
A hushed time when the nightingale,
'Mid the blue silence of the dale,
Can charm the winds into tranquillity;

A moment when the waters lie
Quiet beneath a quiet sky,
And every folded flower is still
In brown wood or on mossy hill,
Soothed by a dark-winged moth's soft lullaby.

And yet of living creatures one
Never knows rest beneath the Sun:
He it is who loves in vain;
Who, wandering through a world of pain,
Seeks everywhere for rest and findeth none.

Sep/90

———

Still Waters[50]

Into the trouble of our noisy ways
There steals at times a prophecy of rest,
So that we lie at peace on Nature's breast
And think the old thoughts of the old far days
When we could linger with contented gaze
By all we saw, apart from men's hot quest
For things beyond their reach, nor yet depressed
By burdens of the world's contempt or praise.
Soon faded is the dream: yet even we
Have known, for one white moment how to lie
By those enchanted waters and to be
As quiet as a quiet evening sky –
Watching like children, with large wakeful eye,
The stillest light that ever lit the sea.

Aug: 90

50 See Psalm 23:2.

B8

Still Waters

—

Into the trouble of our noisy ways
There steals at times a prophecy of rest,
So that we lie at peace on Nature's breast
And think the old thoughts of the old far days
When we could linger with contented gaze
By all we saw, apart from mine hot quest
For things beyond their reach, nor yet depressed
By burdens of the world's contempt or praise.
Soon faded is the dream: yet even we
Have known, for one white moment, how to lie
By those enchanted waters and to be
As quiet as a quiet evening sky—
Watching like children, with large wakeful eye,
The stillest light that ever lit the sea.

Aug: 90

By the River

Swift river, running smoothly to the deep
'Twixt fields of poppied corn and groves of pine,
And ~~past~~ through rich pasture-lands of lowing kine
Till thou canst take at last thy rocky leap
To where, half drowsy with their summer sleep,
The lazy waves crawl up the yellow line
Of the broad sands with music clear as thine,
What is the human secret thou dost keep?
He who stands by thee, warm with human joys
And hopes and fears and doubts, and listens long
To the perpetual whispers of thy voice,
Finds in thee something humanlike, and hears,
Mixed with thy sounds of laughter and of song,
The consecration and the depth of tears.

Pub Quiver '91[51] Aug. 90

51 In pencil; the poem appeared, illustrated and signed simply "S. A. A.," in the June 1891 issue of *The Quiver: An Illustrated Magazine for Sunday and General Reading*, p. [621]; Alexander's name is not listed among the contributors to the volume.

By the River

—

Swift river, running smoothly to the deep
'Twixt fields of poppied corn and grass of pine,
And past through rich pasture-lands of lowing kine
Till thou canst take at last thy rocky leap
To where, half drowsy with their summer sleep,
The lazy waves crawl up the yellow line
Of the broad sands with music clear as thine,
What is the human secret thou dost keep?
He who stands by thee, warm with human joys
And hopes and fears and doubts, and listens long
To the perpetual whispers of thy voice,
Finds in thee something humanlike, and hears,
Mixed with thy sounds of laughter and of song,
The consecration and the depth of tears.

Pitt Quarr '91

Aug. 90

The Flying Years

The flying years,
Rich with old hopes and fears,
Like a dim troop of grey clouds never-ending
At eve before the west wind lightly bending,
Float back to me along the tides of thought.

And at the glance
Of each neglected chance,
Each opening for the spirit to burst through
And blossom with fresh power, I feel anew
All that I might have been & yet am not.

Aug 90

190

The Flying Years

—

The flying years,
Rich with old hopes and fears,
Like a dim troop of grey clouds never-ending—
As we before the west wind lightly bending,
Float back to me along the tides of thought.

And at the glance
Of each neglected chance,
Each opening for the spirit to burst through
And blossom with fresh power, I feel anew
All that I might have been & yet am not.

—

Aug 90

Night's Mystery[52]

Out of the blue, gray Night leaps down and throws
Her mystic spell round tree & field & tower;
Beside her, lightly tripping Fancy goes:
This is her sovereign hour.

This is the hour when strange things walk the earth –
Shapes which no eye of day has ever seen;
Beings and thoughts that almost come to birth,
And yet have never been,

Nor ever will be: soul to sense gives room;
Till the late swallows darting homeward seem,
Amid the glimmer of this fairy gloom,
The swallows of a dream.

Aug 90

52 A draft of "Night's Mystery" occupies in part the verso of a list of magazines and their addresses once tipped into the notebook (see Appendix E).

Night's Mystery.

Out of the blue, gray Night leaps down and throws
Her mystic spell round tree & field & tower;
Beside her, lightly tripping Fancy goes:
This is her sovereign hour.

This is the hour when strange things walk the earth —
Shapes which no eye of day has ever seen;
Brings and thoughts that almost come to birth,
And yet have never been,

Nor ever will be: soul to sense gives room;
Till the late swallows darting homeward seem,
Amid the glamour of this fairy gloom,
The swallows of a dream.

Aug 90

The Dream of Aquinas[53]

Over the sea and land the nightwind swept
Through gloom and glory: one still moonbeam crept
Into the dark cell where Aquinas slept.

The spirit of the night like gentle rain
Came down to soothe the strong heart's joy and pain,
And charm the magic workings of the brain

That rested not, till midnight hours were told,
Searching the ways of wisdom manifold,
To forge with flame great subtle thoughts of gold.

Now the keen fires were quenched; and brooding deep,
The mind its dim unconscious watch did keep
Until a Voice broke through the ~~vale~~ veil of sleep.

Was it an unsubstantial thing he dreamed,
Or a shape like himself? For lo, there seemed
To stand a sacred Form, thorn-diademed.

53 "The story is told that toward the end of his life this greatest of Christian theologians had a dream. In it, he was trying to empty out the ocean with a teaspoon. When asked what he was doing in the dream, Aquinas replied ruefully, 'theology'" (David J. Wolpe, *Why Faith Matters* [New York: HarperCollins, 2009], p. 189).

The Dream of Aquinas

Over the sea and land the nightwind swept
Through gloom and glory: one still moonbeam crept
Into the dark cell where Aquinas slept.

The spirit of the night like gentle rain
Came down to soothe the strong heart's joy and pain,
And charm the magic workings of the brain

That 'rested not, till midnight hours were told,
Searching the ways of wisdom manifold,
To forge with flame great subtle thoughts of gold.

Now the keen fires were quenched; and brooding deep,
The mind in dim unconscious watch did keep
Until a Voice broke through the veil of sleep.

Was it an unsubstantial thing he dreamed,
Or a shape like himself? For lo, there seemed
To stand a sacred form, thorn-diademed.

‘Well hast thou laboured’, said the Voice, ‘for Me.
Great is thy toil: great thy reward shall be.
Choose what thou wilt: I give thy choice to thee’.

Still lay the Saint, as though he heard the dead,
While the slow moonbeam, falling round the bed,
Made a white aureole about his head.

He paused, not doubtful in his choice, but stirred
By a strange wonder: softly came the word –
‘I ask no gift except Thyself, O Lord!’

No gift but Thee! That be our choice as his,
To make a solemn music out of this –
Mixing the heavenly with the earthly bliss.

No gift but Thee, Who art, not here nor there,
But the one ~~gift~~ life of all things good and fair,
At once the Gift and Giver everywhere!

Aug / 90

'Well hast thou laboured', said the Voice, 'for Me.
Great is thy toil: great thy reward shall be.
Choose what thou wilt: I give thy choice to Thee!'

Still lay the Saint, as though he heard the dead,
While the slow moonbeam, falling round the bed,
Made a white aureole about his head.

He paused, not doubtful in his choice, but stirred
By a strange wonder: softly came the word—
'I ask & no gift except Thyself, O Lord!'

No gift but Thee! That be our choice as his,
To make a solemn music out of this—
Mixing the heavenly with the earthly bliss.

No gift but Thee, Who art, not here nor there,
But the one life of all things good and fair,
At once the Gift and Giver everywhere!

Aug/90

Near the Sea

I

When the dark Night

With her dank hair sits by the shores of Time,

I ~~watch~~ [see] the breaking clouds let silver light

Down on the silver rime;

II

As, one by one,

The stars come out, each on a fiery throne,

To watch blue Evening mourning for the sun

With long melodious moan.

III

And then I hear,

Like an old tired voice from an old gray tomb,

The everlasting sea, far off yet near,

Making his hollow boom.

Aug 90

Near the Sea

I

When the dark Night
With her dank hair sits by the shores of Time,
I see watch the breaking clouds let silver light
Down on the silver rime;

II

As, one by one,
The stars come out, each on a fiery throne,
To watch blue Evening mourning for the sun
With long melodious moan.

III

And then I hear,
Like an old tired voice from an old gray tomb,
The everlasting sea, far off yet near,
Making his hollow boom.

Aug 90

A Magic Hour

Night hath one magic moment, strange and dear:
'Tis when the red dusk, dreaming of the sun
And half forgetful that the day is done,
Sees with surprise the yellow moon appear
Lonely amid the pines, and starts to hear
The deepening cry that tells a task begun
For the great owl whose long day-sleep has run
To its dark close in some dim haunt of fear: –
Then, as the last bee leaves the orchis-bloom,
And over riverside and wood and hill
All the divinities of song are still,
There falls upon the darkling sea and land
Like snow, amid the glamour and the gloom,
A silence that is hard to understand.

Sep 90

A Magic Hour

Night hath one magic moment, strange and drear:
'Tis when the red dusk, dreaming of the sun
And half forgetful that the day is done,
Sees with surprise the yellow moon appear
Lonely amid the pines, and starts to hear
The deepening cry that tells a task begun
For the great owl whose long day-sleep has run
To its dark close in some dim haunt of fear:—
Then, as the last bee leaves the orchis-bloom,
And over riverside and wood and hill
All the divinities of song are still,
There falls upon the darkling sea and land
Like snow, amid the glamour and the gloom,
A silence that is hard to understand.

Sept 90

Too Late

I

How wilt thou make
The broken harp revive one strain;
Or learn to wake
Those long-forgotten songs again
– Of passion and of pain?

II

How wilt thou press
Lost odours from the faded rose,
When colourless
It lies upon December snows
As deathly cold as those?

III

How wilt thou give
That heart of fire again to me
And bid it live
That loved so well, so uselessly,
And died for love and thee?

Sep 90.

Too Late

—

I

How wilt thou make
The broken harp revive one strain;
Or learn to wake
Those long-forgotten songs again
— Of passion and of pain?

II

How wilt thou press
Lost odours from the faded rose,
When colourless
It lies upon December snows
As deathly cold as those?

III

How wilt thou give
That heart of fire again to me
And bid it live
That loved so well, so uselessly,
And died for love and thee?

Sept 90.

Parted

Ah! there is nothing more to tell.
And thou who bidst me say farewell,
Because thy heart will have it so,
Truly I see thou dost not know
Why all this sad and weary change befell.

Was it a little thing – a word
That, in the silence lightly stirred,
Cut us asunder, me from thee,
In one sharp moment, as a sea
Of purple clouds when thunder's voice is heard?

Or was it a great thing – the sense
Of some unfitness or offence,
Some need within my soul or thine,
That marked the slow sure parting-line,
And will not suffer me to reach thee hence.

Nor thou nor I will ever know:
For since at last thou bidst me go
Thus in the dark, I say farewell;
≠ And what it means I cannot tell, Sep 90
Save only that thy heart will have it so.

Parted

—

'Ah! there is nothing more to tell.
And then thou bidst me say farewell,
Because thy heart will have it so,
Truly I see thou dost not know
Why all this sad and weary change befell.

Was it a little thing — a word
That, in the silence lightly stirred,
Cute us asunder, me from thee,
In one sharp moment, as a sea
Of purple clouds when thunder's voice is heard?

Or was it a great thing — the sense
Of some unfitness or offence,
Some need within my soul or thine,
That marked the slow sure parting-line,
And will not suffer me to reach these hence.

Nor thou nor I will ever know:
For since at last thou bidst me go
Thus in the dark, I say farewell;
And what it means I cannot tell,
Save only that thy heart will have it so.

Sept 90

INDEX

----◇----

INDEX

page

111.	+ To Wordsworth: A Sonnet	Pub. in "Academy."[54]
112.	What and Whither?	
	Savonarola (see other book).[55]	
113.	By the Harbour.	
115.	Ἀστέρας εἰσαθρεῖς.	
116.	Daybreak.	
119.	Sunbeam.	
120.	Wandering.	
121.	The Bee and the Butterfly.	
122.	Together.	
123.	To a Lily.	
124.	Ossian to the Dying Year.	
126.	A Smile.	
129.	+ March Blossoms.	Pub. in "Time."
130.	~~A cold white mist.~~ Passing	
132.	Until the Sunset.	
133.	The Eremite.	
134.	A Christmas Tragedy.	
143.	At Nightfall.	
144.	Sea-Dreams.	Pub. in "Cassell's Mag."
145.	Peace and the Sword.	
146.	+ Sub Lucem	Pub. in "English Illustrated."
–	+ Sakya-Muni: Newdigate 1887.	Pub. separately.

54 See the texts of the poems noted as published for any further appearances.

55 Alexander's note on p. 112 cites "Savonarola" as his unsuccessful entry for the Newdigate Prize in 1886; the phrasing here suggests that he had at least one other notebook for his poetry.

147. Quietude.

148. Enough.

149. Insperatus Amor.

150. Reconciliation. Pub. in “Home Chimes.”

151. Down from the Mount.

153. Not Comfortless.

154. Must Be.

155. A Child’s Thought.

156. Sailing. Pub. in “Home Chimes.”

157. Two Worlds are His. Pub. in “Home Chimes.”

158. To October. ≠

+ 159. After Rain. Pub. in “Macmillan’s.”

+ 161. Memories. Pub. in “English Illustrated.”

+ 163. At Moonrise. Pub. in “English Illustrated.”

165. By the Sea.

166. Unspoken.

167. Sorrow.

+ 169. ~~Today and Tomorrow.~~ Resignation.

17~~1~~0. May Music.

171. Lorelei (from Heine)

172. In the Violet-time. Pub. in “Atlanta—”

17~~4~~5. Love in the Roses (from Anacreon)

174. Pine-wood Glooms.

1	Quietude	
48.	Enough	
49	Insperatus Amor.	
50	Reconciliation.	Pub. in "Home Chimes".
51	Down from the Mount.	
53	Not Comfortless.	
54	Must Be.	
55	A Child's Thought.	
56	Sailing.	Pub. in "Home Chimes".
57	Two Worlds are His.	Pub. in "Home Chimes".
58	To October.	≠
59	After Rain.	Pub. in "Macmillan's".
61	Memories.	Pub. in "English Illustrated."
163	At Moonrise.	Pub. in "English Illustrated."
165	By the Sea.	
166	Unspoken.	
167	Sorrow.	
169	~~Today and Tomorrow.~~ Resignation	
170	May Music	
171	Lorelei (from Heine)	
172	In the Violet-time.	Pub. in "Atalanta".
174	Love in the Roses (from Anacreon)	
174	Pine-wood Glooms.	

176. It must be Spring.

178. It must be Summer. Pub. in Cassell's Magazine.

179. Earth's Winters change.

180. Life + Pain.

181. ~~An Autumn~~ Winter Sunset. Pub. in Cassell's Magazine.

182. Song: To the Winds Pub. in 'English Illustrated' for June, 89.

183. Homeless.

185. + Love's Oracle - Pub. in 'English Illustrated' for July, 89.

186. + ~~Looking Back.~~ Retrospect.

187. Stanzas.

188. Still Waters.

189. By the River. Pub. in 'Quiver' June, 1891.[56]

190. The Flying Years.

191. Night's Mystery.

192. Dream of Aquinas.

194. Near the Sea.

195. A Magic Hour.

196. Too Late.

197. Parted.

56 In pencil.

176	It must be Spring	
178	It must be Summer	Pub. in Cassell's Magazine
179	Earth's Winters change.	
180	Life & Pain	
181	An ~~Autumn~~ Winter Sunset	Pub. in Cassell's Magazine
182	Song: To the Winds	Pub. in 'English Illustrated' for J
183	Homeless	
185 +	Love's Oracle	Pub. in 'English Illustrated' for J
186 +	~~Looking Back~~ Retrospect.	
187	Stanzas	
188	Still Waters	
189	By the River	Pub. in 'Queen' June 1891
190	The Flying Years	
191	Night's Mystery	
192	Dream of Aquinas	
194	Near the Sea	
195	A Magic Hour	
196	Too Late	
197	Parted	

[Recto] [57]

MAGAZINES

+ Leisure Hour – 56, Paternoster Row…

Good Words – W.C.

+ Quiver –

+ Casell's Magazine Cassells[58]

English Illustrated – Macmillans. – Longmans

+ Cornhill – Smith Elder. 15 Waterloo Place

Temple Bar – Bentley ~~?~~

+ Atalanta – ~~Hatchards~~[59]

+ Newbury House Magazine – Griffith & James

Macmillans – [~~illeg.~~] ~~Paternoster~~ [?]

+ Sunday at Home, – Paternoster Row

+ Sunday Magazine – ~~W.C.~~ Tavistock St.

+ Argosy. New Burlington St. W.

A. C. [?]

Atlantic Monthly – Belgravia ~~?~~ – Chambers –

Century – East & West? – Harpers – Lippincott

Longman – ┤London Society├ & Sun? – Scribner –

Tinsley – Universal Review ? – Household Words

Igdrasil[60] ? + Clergyman's Magazine? Lyceum

20 St. Bride St. G.C. – Graphic ? & Weeklies

---

57 See Appendix E. This list, in pencil, is on a slip 10.1 cm x 16.5 cm. once lightly pasted by a corner to the page just before the index.

58 A bracket for "Cassell's" incorporates "Quiver" and "Cassell's Magazine"

59 *Atalanta*, ed. by L. T. Meade (Elizabeth Thomasina Meade Smith [1854-1914]) and a popular magazine for girls, was published by Hatchards' from October 1887.

60 Subtitled *Journal of the Ruskin Reading Guild / A Magazine of Literature, Art, and Social Philosophy*, published January 1890 - March 1892, thus helping to set boundaries to when Alexander probably drew up this list.

MAGAZINES

+ Leisure Hour – 56, Paternoster Row
Good Words — W.C.
+ Quiver — } Cassells
+ Cassell's Magazine }
English Illustrated — Macmillans — Longmans
+ Cornhill — Smith Elder. 15 Waterloo Place
Temple Bar — Bentley
+ Atalanta — Hatchards
+ Newbery House Magazine — Griffith & Farran
Macmillans — Victoria Paternoster
+ Sunday at Home, Paternoster Row
+ Sunday Magazine — W.C Tavistock St.
+ Argosy. New Burlington St. W.
A C.
Atlantic Monthly — Belgravia — Chambers —
Century — East & West? — Harpers — Leisure hour
Longmans — London Society — Time? — Evelyn
Bentley — Dublin Review? — Household Words
Macmillan? + Clergyman's Magazine? Lyceum
20 St Bride St E.C. — Graphic? + weekly

[Verso]

Temple Bar B.P.

Outing (Nature &c) V.G.P. 170 Strand

Chambers Journal (sonnet nature &c) 339 High St. Edinburgh

Etc etc.

[Also on the verso, upside down to the list above is a draft, still in pencil, of "Night's Mystery" (see Appendix E) signed with Alexander's initials in a circle: "SAA"]:

NIGHT'S MYSTERY

Out of the blue, gray Night leaps down & throws

Her mystic spell round tree & field & tower;

Beside her, lightly tripping Fancy goes:

This is her reigning sovereign hour.

This is the hour when strange ~~things are abroad~~ things walk the earth

Shapes ~~that the~~ which no eye of day has ever seen;

Beings & thoughts that almost come to birth,

And yet have never been,

Nor ever will be: soul to sense gives room;

~~T~~ Till the late swallows, darting homeward seem,

Amid the glimmer of this fairy gloom,

The ~~shadows~~ swallows of a dream.

SAA

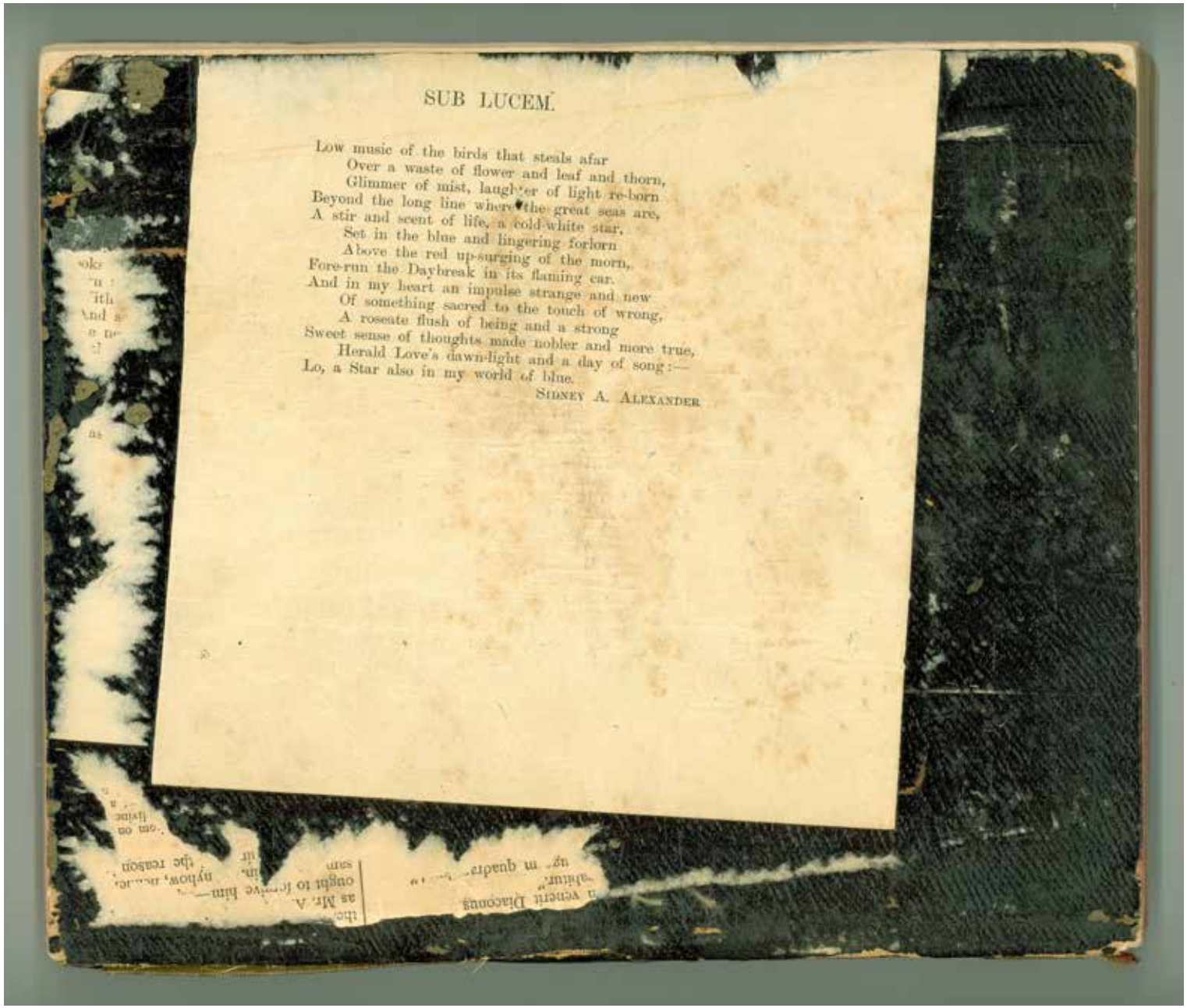
NIGHT'S MYSTERY

Out of the blue, gray Night leaps down at noon
Her mystic spell round tree + field + town;
Beside her, lightly whispering Fancy goes:
This is her reigning hour.

This is the hour when strange ~~things are done~~ walk the earth
Shapes that the day has never seen;
Brings + thoughts which almost come to birth,
And yet have never been,

Now ~~such~~ will be: Soul to soul's room;
Till the late swallows, darting homeward,
Amid the glamour of this cavern gloom,
Are ~~night~~ swallowed up in a dream.

SAA



SUB LUCEM.

Low music of the birds that steals afar
Over a waste of flower and leaf and thorn,
Glimmer of mist, laughter of light re-born
Beyond the long line where the great seas are,
A stir and scent of life, a cold white star,
Set in the blue and lingering forlorn
Above the red up-surging of the morn,
Fore-run the Daybreak in its flaming car.
And in my heart an impulse strange and new
Of something sacred to the touch of wrong,
A roseate flush of being and a strong
Sweet sense of thoughts made nobler and more true,
Herald Love's dawn-light and a day of song:—
Lo, a Star also in my world of blue.

SIDNEY A. ALEXANDER